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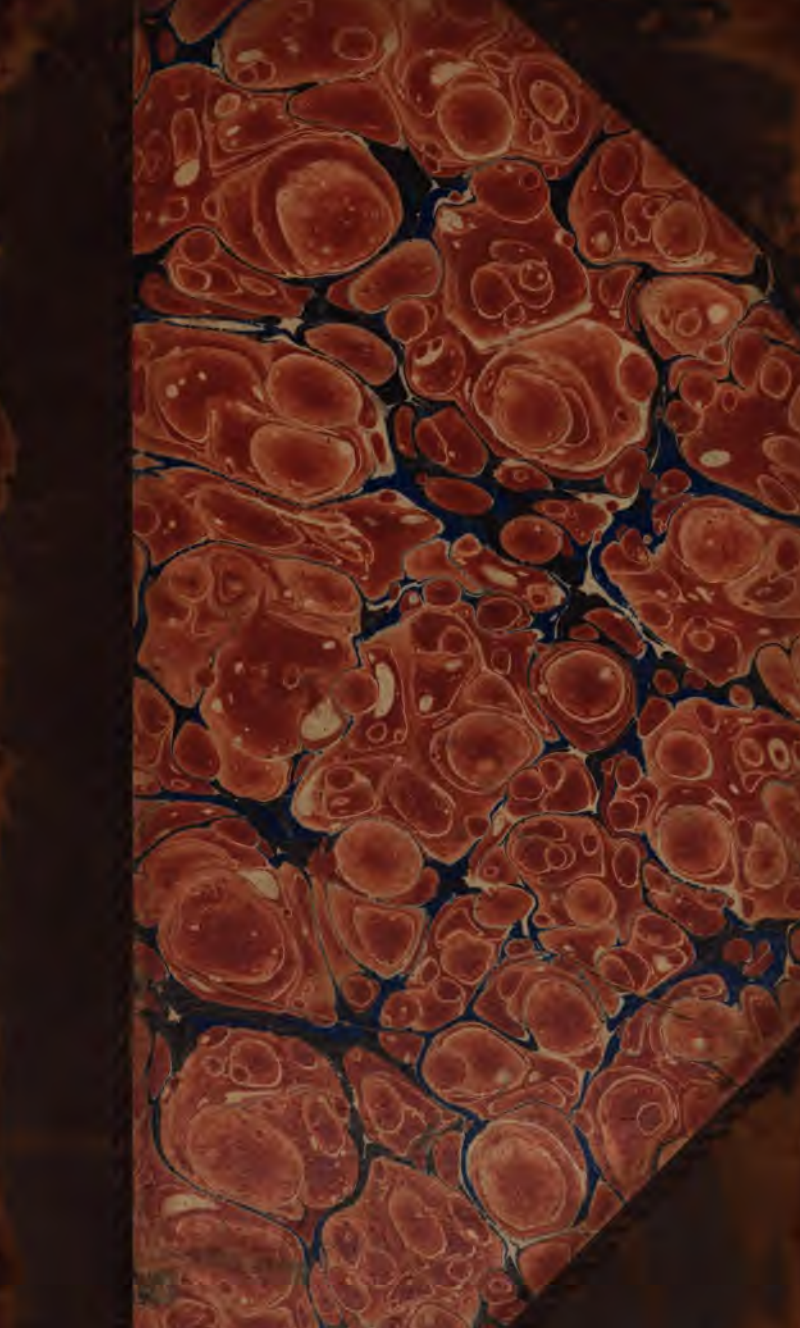
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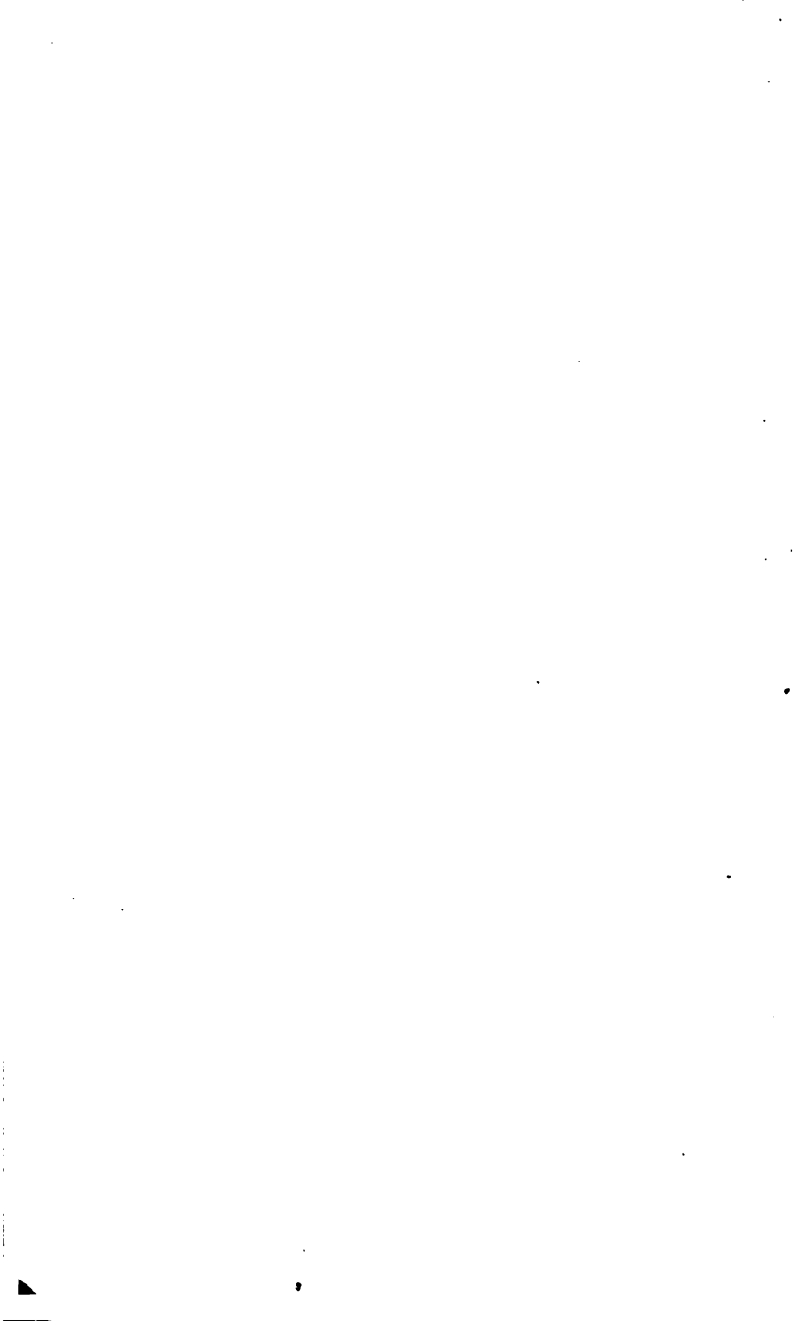
1840.

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AN ESSAY
ON
THE PASTORAL OFFICE,

CONTAINING
A DEFENCE OF WESLEYAN METHODISM,

ESPECIALLY THE RIGHTS AND EXERCISES
OF HER PASTORS.

BY JAMES CATTON,

WESLEYAN MINISTER.

LONDON:
SOLD FOR THE AUTHOR BY J. MASON, 14, CITY-ROAD,
THE WESLEYAN MINISTERS,
J. ROGERS, GRANTHAM, AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1840.

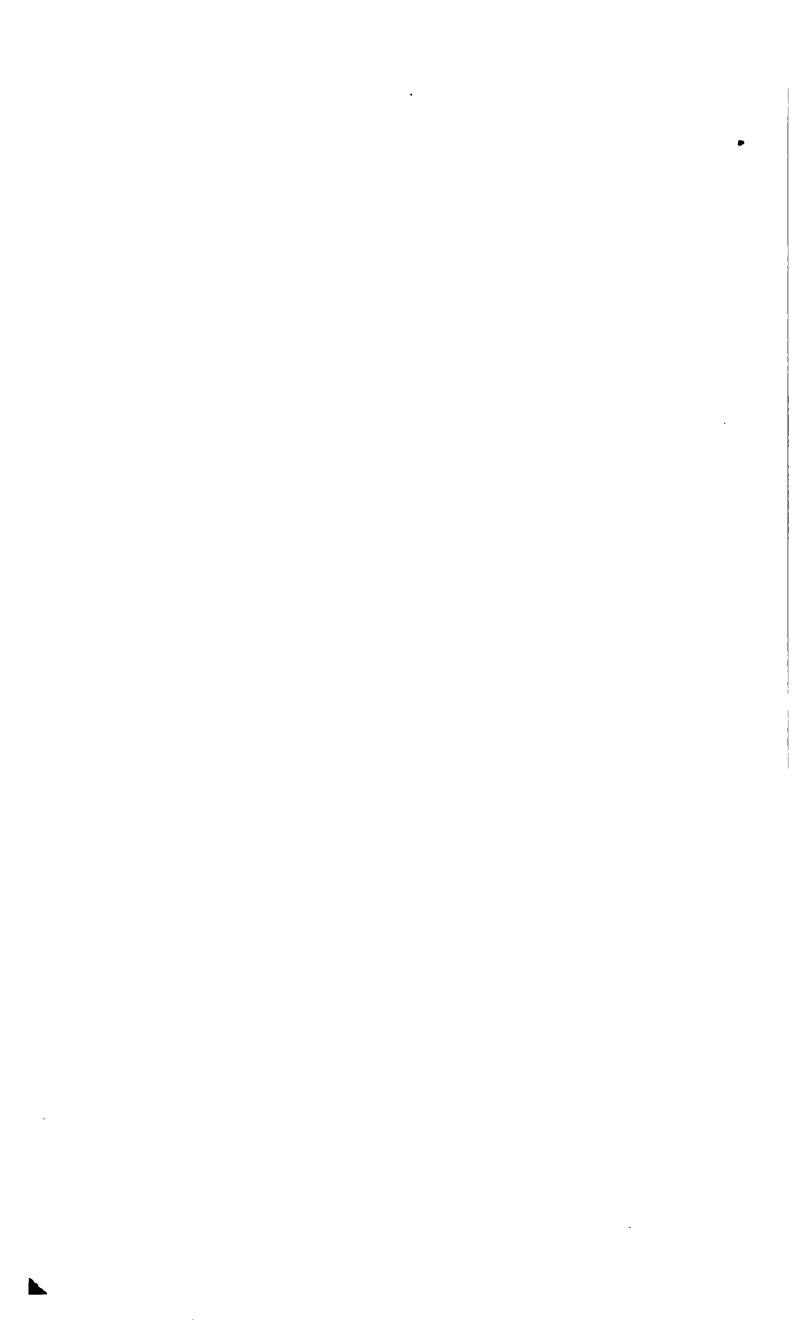
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GRANTHAM:

PRINTED BY J. ROGERS, WALKER-GATE.

TO THE
MINISTERS OF THE WESLEYAN CONNEXION,
THE STUDENTS IN THE THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION,
THE LOCAL PREACHERS, LEADERS, AND MEMBERS IN SOCIETY,
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD,
THIS SMALL VOLUME,
IN WHICH THE RIGHTS, AND EXERCISES, OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE
ARE STATED AND VINDICATED,
BY WHICH IT IS HOPED THE MINISTRY MAY BE GUIDED,
AND COMFORTED,
IS HUMBLY DEDICATED
BY THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

IN 1837, a premium of one hundred pounds was offered by a gentleman of Manchester, for the best original essay on the scriptural character, duties, and claims of the "Pastoral Office;" with a special reference to the manner in which that office is defined and exercised in the Wesleyan Methodist connexion.

Eight Essays were received, "several of which" the adjudicators considered to "possess considerable merit." The present Essay was one of the eight.

The Prize was offered, no doubt, with a design to excite the attention of the preachers, and the connexion in general, to investigate the subject; believing that a right understanding of it would have a tendency to promote peace and stability in the societies which have been, and still may be, agitated, in reference to the rights and exercises of the "Pastoral Office."

Only one of the Essays having yet been printed, the end for which the Premium was offered would not have been fully answered; for there are a variety of minds, tastes, talents, and circumstances, which could only be met by a variety of Essays coming forth on the same subject; and several would like to see a variety of minds and talents exerted on the same subject. I therefore waited for some time hoping to hear of another coming forth; but being disappointed, I ventured with unfeigned diffidence to give this publicity.

While engaged in writing this Essay I was interrupted for several months by personal affliction; and since it has been in the press I have had my mind painfully afflicted by the loss of two of my beloved children—so that I could not give it that time and attention which I desired, and it needed.

As to the manner in which the work is accomplished, I need say but little, the public will decide. I may however be permitted to say—considering my feeble qualifications, little leisure, and many and great interruptions—"I have done what I could."

The "Pastoral Office" has been thought a subject of sufficient interest and importance for the Press, ever since the invention of Printing. Among the Fathers, St. Chrysostom wrote on the priesthood. Since the Reformation, the subject has been one of the great points of controversy. Zuinglius Ulricus, Bishop of Zurich, wrote a work on this subject, which was translated and printed by Vernon in 1550, entitled:—"The ymage of bothe Pastoures, a most fruitful and necessary boke, to be had and redde in all churches therwyth to enarm all symple and ignorant folks agaynst the ravinge wolves and false prophets." Gilbert Burnet of the church of England published his Pastoral care: and a long list of others wrote on the same subject.

The non-conformists also considered this a vital subject. Baxter published his Gildas Silvianus, or Reformed Pastor; and after him several others. "On the people's need of a living pastor asserted and explained." "Or on the pains of painful pastors," &c.

And now after existing a hundred years we are called to prove that in the truest and best sense, we have succeeded to the doctrines, spirit, work and successes of the apostles. And though our ministry by many is considered irregular and supplementary; we would reply, so was St. Paul's; he was an irregular apostle and supplementary, for he was the thirteenth apostle.

The Prize Essay is an elegant and lengthened work; but my plan and materials differ so much from it, that they may be both needed. This Essay however, being so much less in size and price may at least suit those, who have but little time, and as little money.

May the blessing of the Great Head of the church attend it.

J. C.

GRANTHAM, *Feb. 29th*, 1840.

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priestcraft, oppression, and tyranny), "the Pastoral Office."

The language of the Psalmist may be adopted by the church: "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? many are they that rise up against me. The people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take council together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Every thing connected with the safety and extension of the church is of the greatest importance to true Christians; for they consider the church, as Christianity embodied and alive.

When we consider the preparatory dispensations, and preparations for founding the Christian church; the Foundation Stone, and the bloody ceremonies in laying the foundation; when we consider the storms and difficulties through which it has passed; the conflicts and martyrdoms required in removing the hay, straw, and stubble from the foundation; and the awful disparity between the true and spurious church in its spirit, operations, and end; can we wonder if every true Christian should tremble for the ark of the Lord, and say, "If I forget thee, O" Zion, "let my right hand forget her cunning," "and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth?"

It is evident, therefore, that there is a very close connection between the interests of Christianity in general, and the interests of the church in particular; also between a lively and faithful ministry, and a healthy and prosperous church.

When the spirit has fled from the body, however strong and beautiful it may have been, it soon will become corrupt. The efficient and life-giving ordinances are the vigour of the church. These are like the rolling river of the water of life, or the breath of Heaven; so that most of the enemies of Christianity, wreaking their vengeance upon the church, aim their blows at it through "the Pastoral Office." For either they, or their great leader, perceive that the principal evils which can effect the church, are the enfeebling, corrupting, and bringing into ridicule and contempt, the ministers of Christ.

There was a time when infidels boldly and openly accused and denounced the Prophets and Apostles, as vile seducers, or weak enthusiasts; but finding the great mass of the people were shocked at such awful profanity, they saw it would be much easier and safer to denounce the present living ministry, as a set of mercenary, hypocritical enthusiasts, or crafty tyrants—the nuisance and encumbrance of society—to which sentiments and opinions they have succeeded in bringing greater numbers than to the former.

In this crusade against the Ministry, they have been joined by many, who in other respects do not imbibe their notions; and, also, by many spurious Christians and false brethren, who, though they would revolt at many of their attempts, unite with them to pull down Pastoral authority.

The enemies of "the Pastoral Office may be divided into three classes:—

The *first* class, profess to wish to pull down only such

ministers as are not supported by voluntary contributions; the *second* class are for no regular ministry, except one composed of local or lay preachers; and the *third* vote for the entire extinction of all priests (as they term them), and priestcraft, *in toto*. It is useless, with such persons, to appeal to scripture or antiquity; but surely there is some common-sense remaining in some of them, to which, for a moment, I would appeal.

Only let it be admitted there is a God; then it follows, that he ought to be publicly worshipped; then some suitable persons should be employed in conducting divine worship. For religion ought to be connected with the civil and social systems of society; and if any comfort or support, from reason or tradition, could be afforded to the tried, the sorrowful, and the afflicted, it ought to be taken to them; and such would be the ministers of God, for the public good, who would, therefore, need and deserve support.

But, O how unreasonable, inconsistent, and sinful it is for persons professing to believe in the sinful, fallen, and perishing condition of the world, in the interposition of God's mercy, and in the gospel of Jesus Christ, to conspire with profane infidels, to stigmatize and ridicule "the Pastoral Office!"

Could the ministry be brought into general disrespect, they see clearly that their teaching and services would not be received for want of character to recommend them. It is this that prompts the enemies of the sacred office to misrepresent and depress their authority, and to decry

the usefulness of their profession; and when their enemies (as they style them), are disarmed of character and authority, their point is gained; they hope to have pleasure without restraint—vice without reproof.

That man is fallible, is certain; and that many a star has fallen upon the waters, and the waters have become bitter; and they who drank of those waters have been filled with bitterness; by which, I mean that many persons have improperly obtruded into the sacred office, and others have fallen from those qualifications which they once professed (in both cases to the public injury), is beyond doubt: but ought we, on this account, to brand all—pour contempt on all? Ought we not to act as in common and every-day matters? If we know that there is in circulation, base and counterfeit gold and silver, shall we cast all our gold and silver away, and cease to receive any more, because there is some base mixed with the true coin? shall we not rather be more cautious to examine it well to ascertain whether it is full weight, and have every outward mark correct? Just so in reference to the sacred office; marks are laid down in Scripture to enable us to ascertain the true from the false Shepherd. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” “Can ye tell a vine from a thorn? or, a fig-tree from a thistle? so may you tell a soul-converted and soul-converting ministry, from a formal and unsuccessful one. True ministers can appeal to their people and say, “Ye are our epistles, known and read of all men.”

Hence, also, we see the necessity of works on “the

Pastoral Office," to guide the minds of enquirers to the scriptural Pastor, and to assist those who wish to form their character after the earliest and purest shepherds of the flock of Christ.

And such is the constitution of the Christian church, that it will be always needful that there be in it true and lawful Pastors; not only for the rightful administration of God's holy word and sacraments, but also for the one orderly government thereof, and the dispensing of wholesome discipline. The flock committed to their charge, requiring all tender care, vigilant inspection, and indulgent provision. That such shepherds are requisite, is confirmed by many precepts and examples in scripture.

"The Pastoral Office" is one of ordinary and perpetual obligation in the church. Jeremiah represents the Almighty as promising to give to the church, Pastors according to his own heart, which should feed the flock with knowledge and understanding; and in Peter, the Pastors are commanded to feed the flock of God which is among them; taking the oversight thereof; not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples to the flock, that when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

The term Pastor is derived from the Latin word, which signifies (as is seen in the above quotations), a shepherd, one that oversees, manages, and feeds a flock. The term is one of great amplitude of meaning, and suggests many

thoughts in reference to the "Pastoral" work. A shepherd "knows his sheep and is known of" them. The shepherd has a fold of safety for his flock; he judges between cattle and cattle; between sheep and goats; between fat and lean; strong and weak; healthy and diseased; orderly and disorderly. He must account for his flock: whether he has lost any by carelessness, or destroyed any by cruelty. He must go before his flock, and lead them into green pastures and beside the still waters; and his joy and happiness must be to see them thrive.

The term Shepherd or Pastor is frequently applied to God the Father, to Jesus Christ, and also to kings. The Psalmist says, "The Lord is my shepherd." Christ is called the shepherd and bishop of souls: he himself says, "I am the good shepherd, and I give my life for the sheep." King David is called a shepherd; and Mesha, king of Moab, was "a sheep-master, and rendered unto the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs, and a hundred thousand rams, with the wool."

Pastors are also called *Presbuteroi*, elders, either from their age, or because of the gravity of their manners and carriage; and also *episkopoi*, bishops, superintendents, or overseers.

The general term to distinguish the ministry from the laity is *kleros*, clergy; either because God is their only portion or lot, or because they are peculiarly his portion.

In law, they are termed Sacerdotes; and by title, Reverend; because of their exclusive consecration to

the holy and awfully responsible work of reconciling men to God, and bringing them into conformity to Him; so that the first Christians "esteemed them highly in love for their work's sake."

THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

“Whatever gladdens the heart of men or angels, with any real or satisfactory joy, comes from heaven. It is a portion of the pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; a ray issuing from the brightness of everlasting life.”—BLAIR.

1. CHRISTIANITY employs various and numerous instrumentalities; it says to all, “Work in my vineyard;” “Be not weary in well doing;” “To do good, and communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

2. But Christianity has also established a regular order of labourers; who are to be wholly devoted to it, and employed continually in promoting it, “To preach the word; to be instant in season and out of season.”

3. The “Pastoral Office” is so dissimilar to any prior sacred office, that it may be said to have originated with Christianity.

The priesthood and service of the temple were principally typical of Christ and his work; unless we may consider the Levites' offering up incense and blessing the people as typical of a part of the work of Christian ministers; but the builders of the temple, and those who digged the stones out of the quarry, and squared and fitted them for use, more fully typified the work of the Christian ministry. Some of the prophets came nearest to this office; they were the voice of God, and frequently had a message from God to the people; and some of them taught the people; as Ezra, who read the scriptures to the people and gave them the meaning of it; and so the apostles sometimes term preaching, prophecy; but, after all, the "Pastoral Office" has so many peculiarities, that it may be considered as originating with the Christian system.

4. The "Pastoral Office" derives its authority from Christ, and may be termed a divine legation. The twelve appear to have been first called to be disciples, and then after they had been with their Master for several years, were chosen to be his apostles. After the resurrection, our Lord reinstated Peter (who had, by denying Christ, forfeited his office), thrice interrogating him, "Simon Peter, lovest thou me? The third time, Peter answering, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" was then commissioned to feed Christ's sheep, and his lambs; and unto him were given the keys of the kingdom, to open the gospel dispensation, and the church of Christ to Jews and Gentiles. The general

commission given by Christ to his apostles, after his resurrection, together with the promises and blessings connected therewith, is sublime and impressive; and it shews the dignity of Christ—the amplitude of his designs—the sufficiency of his power—and the continuance of their office. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (this points out the geographical and intellectual extent of their commission); and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!” Again, “Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,” &c. “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain.”

The twelve, with St. Paul added to them, were called “the apostles.” The adding of St. Paul to the twelve was occasioned by Christ’s appearing to him when in glory, and declaring that he appeared unto him “to make” him “an apostle;” “a chosen vessel to testify of Christ before rulers and kings.” He was commissioned to go to the people, and to the Gentiles: “I send you,” was his authority; and his work, “to open blind eyes;” “to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of satan unto God, that they might receive the forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me.”

The term *apostolos*, signifies one that is sent, a legate,

missionary, or ambassador; so that the calling and work of the apostles was to plant churches and to preach the gospel all the world over, without limitation.

But this cannot be said of the "Pastoral Office;" for, when churches were founded, then the apostles "ordained elders in every city;" and the terms father and elder suppose a family; the term shepherd supposes a flock; pastor, a church: so that it is plain, when the apostles had gathered a church out of the world by their preaching, "they ordained an elder," or pastor, "in every place;" to feed and keep together, the church gathered, "taking the oversight thereof."

It appears that the apostles were cautious not to lay hands suddenly on any—not to select a novice. Three things appear to have been requisite before they were appointed to the office: First, spiritual grace. Second, suitable gifts. Third, a divine call.

The term ELDER, is one concerning which there has been much controversy. It appears to have been a general term for pastors, teachers, helpers, &c.; for the elders would differ, perhaps, in circumstances and qualifications in different places. Some would be enabled to give themselves up wholly to the work of the ministry; and others, only in part.

For the general import of the term elder, see the first epistle of Peter; where he styles himself an *elder*; and addresses the officers of the church, in the term, "the elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also

a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed;" "feed the flock of God which is among you:" and in St. Paul's first epistle to Timothy, we read, "let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine:" and when writing to Titus, he says, "for this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I appointed thee; If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men; sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."* And in Acts xx. 28. when about to leave the church, which was at Ephesus, the apostle addressed the elders thereof, saying, "take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, (*episkopous*) bishops, or elders; so that we perceive there was a plurality of bishops in the same place; which could not have been the case according to the *present import* of the term bishop; also at the commencement of the epistle to the Philippians, he addresses the bishops, &c, at Phi-

* The term bishop in the above passage is used synonymously with that of elder: bishop, presbyter, or elder signifying the same office.

lippi. Again we find him giving orders to Titus, "to ordain elders (*presbuteroi*) in every city; for which, in a verse or two after, when describing their character, he uses the term (*episcopos*) bishop.*

The EVANGELISTS differed from the Elders, for they preached the gospel generally, and were the assistants and companions of the apostles. Timothy and Titus appear to have sustained this office. St. Paul, in his second epistle to Timothy, says, "thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also; thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; no man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." And then in the fourth chapter, "but watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." It appears, therefore, that Timothy was an assistant to St. Paul; as was also Demas, at one time: and we read in the ninth and following verses of the same chapter, "do thy diligence to come shortly unto me, for Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world, and is departed to Thessalonica; Crescens, to Galatia; Titus, unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is profitable to me for

* It is farther to be remarked, that the office and duties of an elder, as distinguished from a bishop, are nowhere exhibited to us in the New Testament.—DWIGHT.

the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus." These were the scriptural evangelists. The general meaning of the term being *gospelers*. It is frequently applied exclusively to the writers of the four gospels.

When God's gifts to the church are enumerated, apostles come first in the Christian church; then the evangelists; and afterwards pastors and teachers.

DEACONS and deaconesses were doubtless the lowest officers of the Christian church; for we learn in Paul's first epistle to Timothy, (verse 13.) that "they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree (or higher office), and great boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus." And the same apostle addresses them in his epistle to the Philippians, "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," (*diakonois*).

The origin of this office is given in the sixth chapter of the Acts. It was instituted for the better regulation of the temporal supplies of the poor and sick. Stephen and Philip were deacons; but we find that this did not disqualify them for the office of preaching also. This office is not enumerated in that passage of Holy Writ which speaks of the officers of the church; it was instituted when the members of the church had all things common. Such officers are still necessary to attend to the temporal concerns of the church, and of the poor; but some include under this term lay agency of every kind.

One great error, in reference to the apostles and evan-

gelists, seems to be this, to consider, that not only their office but their work ceased with the apostolic age, and that the only office in the church now is that of pastors. That some peculiarities in the work of the apostles ceased with them is certain, such as their being chosen witnesses of Christ's resurrection, and their peculiar authority and gifts, &c.; but as long as christian churches need forming, and the world needs converting—missionaries and assistant-missionaries are, and will be, doing the work of the apostles and evangelists, and preparing the way for pastors, teachers, deacons or stewards.

It is not in our power perhaps to ascertain now whether the majority of the first pastors were public teachers, or private exhorters; but the apostle has placed this beyond all controversy: viz, that those pastors must claim "double honour who rule well and labour in the word and doctrine;" and even now, in small villages, pastors may appoint assistants in their absence, to watch over the church, and give private admonitions and directions, who may not be able to "labour in word and doctrine."

The first elders in the christian church were called to that office *through the apostles*; by whom God spake, as his inspired and infallible guides; as we read, "separate unto me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them:" but now the true ministers of Christ *are called inwardly* and personally, by the Holy Ghost, to take upon themselves this office.

To CALL, signifies to select, qualify, and ordain a person for some work or service. "See (Exodus xxxi. 2.)

“I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, and he was appointed to ornament the temple of God.” And in Isaiah xxii. 20. we read; “and it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiash: and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.”

In the New Testament, St. Paul, speaking of Christ's calling, says, “no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.” So also, the twelve were called by Christ, who declared, that they had not chosen him, (so far as their office was concerned) but that he had chosen them.

The 23rd article of the Church of England, says, “it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same: and at the time of ordination,

the bishop asks the candidate, whether he thinks himself truly called, according to the will of God.

Nelson, in his "Rights of the Clergy," says, "it would be well, if *all* would examine whether *each* thinks himself inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the ministry."

But when one enters holy orders, only to qualify himself for a benefice, without any call from the Holy Spirit, (which, it is to be feared, is too frequently the case), it is very improbable, that the God of Truth should give any blessing to the services or ministry of such a person, who has entered into the church by a wilful and premeditated lie.

In page 34 of "Myles' History of Methodism," the question is put, "what is it to be moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon yourself this office?" Answer—It can mean no less than, to be inwardly convinced, by the Spirit of God, that it is His will."

We may say, it is an inward, full, and continued persuasion, that God intends the individual for the work of the ministry; and if obedient to the heavenly call, God will open his way, and place him in it.

This call is attended with a deep sympathy for perishing souls, the constraining love of Christ, and a consciousness of, "woe be unto me, if I preach not the gospel." This call must also be corroborated with grace, and gifts suitable for the work; and generally by the recognition and call of the church; and will be followed by fruit.

"Truth," says St. Bernard, "does not shew itself to impure souls; and wisdom does not confide in those persons, who ambitiously court the praise of men; who shamefully traffic with their ministry; who preach, only for a subsistence. How dare they attest things which they have not seen; and speak of things, of which they are entirely ignorant? Why do they undertake the works of light, before they are illuminated? Why do they not begin by purifying their souls? for then, the truth may be both discerned and preached by them: but, if they rank purity of heart and mind among the qualities that they esteem not altogether so necessary in a minister of the gospel, and are rash to discourse publicly, before they are thoroughly informed, they will either err very grossly, or be generally despised."

The candidate for the sacred office, must be "the salt of the earth," by his piety and example; before he is "the light of the world" by his eloquence.

He should be directed and aided by the Spirit of God in his labours: but, he never will, unless this Spirit resides in him. His discourses should rather be the effects of inspiration, than of art and study; but how can they, if he be without probity, without holiness?

When, therefore, men are called to this office by the Spirit of God; when this call is corroborated with sincere, powerful, and aggressive piety; and when, full of simplicity, zeal, activity, and courage, and these tempered with prudence, but not checked or depressed by it; and when, suitable gifts are connected with such

piety ; clearness and strength of mind, fulness of knowledge and wisdom, majestic and impressive eloquence ; such are likely to be able and successful "ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit," "whose praise is not" only "of men, but of God."

It will be requisite, in this part of the subject, to notice the FORM of setting apart such men as before described, to the sacred office, by the request of the church.

True Pastors must be selected from the church of Christ, and not from the children of this world ; who are as "strangers and aliens" "from the commonwealth of Israel." Those who are qualified for this office, should be known and recommended by the church, to which they belong, as fit persons to be wholly set apart to the work of the ministry after a fit term of probation.

The form of ordination depends upon the object intended to be accomplished by it.

1. Some have gone so far, as to suppose, that the spirit, power, validity, and success of the ministry depended *entirely* upon ordination.

2. Others look upon it as nothing, but a recognising of those qualifications which exist already ; with prayer for their increase ; and the bestowing of the full official rights, and immunities of the office, by the official representatives of the church ; by which they are publicly recognised, as valid ministers ; and the communicating of authority to them, to teach and preach,

to administer the sacraments, and exercise discipline.

The forms and ceremonies of ordination have differed very much in different countries and ages. Some have translated the "laying on of hands," the lifting up of hands to pray for a blessing; or, to offer a benediction over the candidate. This is the lowest and simplest form.

We do not find, that any particular words were used at the laying on of hands, in ordination, for several centuries; and then, these words were pronounced, "receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye remit, are remitted; and whose sins ye retain, they are retained."

In the latter rituals, the giving of the vestments was added; and the anointing of the priest's head and hands; with a particular form of blessing them. Afterwards, there was another ceremony added; in putting on the vestments, (which was usually done by the bishop,) "take the yoke of God, for it is sweet; and his burden, for it is light: then the *casula* was put on, and these words were added, "let the Lord clothe thee with the robe of innocence." Then the *paten*, with the host and cup with the wine, and these words were pronounced, "do thou take power to offer sacrifices, and to celebrate mass, as well for the living as the dead; and lastly, the bishop made a cross upon the priest with oil and chrisme, and kissed him.

Now all this must obviously be of human devising. Praying over the person to be ordained, with the hands upon his head, is all that can be gathered from the

scriptural ordinations. What is supplied in the protestant mode of ordination, is much more in character, and has a very important significancy. Presenting the Holy Bible they say, "take thou authority to preach the word of God; and to minister the sacraments, where thou shalt be lawfully appointed."

But, in whom the power, or sole jurisdiction of ordaining be invested; whether in one person, above the rank of presbyters; or lodged in a college, (a number) acting in a parity of power; has been a subject of lengthened and angry controversy.

Timothy was exhorted "neglect not the gift that is in thee: which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*."

And can any be more qualified by skill and office than the aged and experienced pastors, for the examination and ordination of other pastors for the continuance and extension of the church; beyond which all is mere strife of party; or a contention, "who shall be greatest in the kingdom of God."*

All must admit, that it is proper, that particular churches and connexions should examine, and formally and publicly recognise their ministry; that it be not left to any man to start up and obtrude himself into the ministry uncalled and unqualified.

But still the scriptural warrant for ordaining min-

* When the bishops first took the lead in ordination, the presbyters were united with them; and they confessed, they had the power only with the presbyters jointly.

isters is not so full and authoritative as some would represent. We find no precedent for ordination in the conduct of our Lord. We do not find that either the apostles, or the seventy were ordained ; and it is thought, the practice of the apostles and evangelists, arose from their power to communicate spiritual gifts ; for the apostles left no directions to any after them, to continue this “laying on of hands;” and it is very unaccountable, (if so much importance be connected with it, and if it was to have continued in the church), that in none of their writings they should have expressed the least intention of it ; or at all have recommended it to their successors.

If apostolic precedent be pleaded as sufficient, it is obvious, that they not only ordained pastors, but also, all the officers of the church.

However, the simple act of “laying on of hands,” (if no such extraordinary claims be connected with it, as some connect with it ; or no superstitious ceremonies be added to it, as some have added), cannot be objected to. Our Lord laid his hands on children, and blessed them. The simple use of it, as a devotional form may be used, or not, without endangering the validity and efficiency of the “Pastoral Office.”

The NECESSITY of a certain order of men being separated from secular callings, and set apart to this work, must appear evident, if we consider :—

1. The objects contemplated by the ministry, with

their importance and difficulty, even such as require the *whole man*, and the *whole time*.

2. That the common sense of the whole catholic church has deemed this expedient: and especially,—

3. That the Scriptures exhort to it. The apostle says to Timothy, “give thyself wholly to it;” for “no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, &c. And in Acts vi. 4. we read, “but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” The field is vast,—the harvest white,—the labourers few, says our Lord.

All the objections against this may be classified as unjust, unreasonable, and impracticable.

It is unjust, for any church to receive the regular labours of persons, without remuneration.

It is unreasonable to suppose, that men who are not set apart, will make that proficiency; or give that attention and care to the churches, which they require, for their regulation, establishment, and enlargement.

The impracticability of it is seen, in the bad working of these systems, or sects, which have adopted it.

CHAPTER II.

PASTORAL AUTHORITY.

“And that which further evidenceth that the power of the church doth not arise from mere consent, is that deed of gift whereby our blessed Saviour did confer the power of the keys on the apostle Peter, as the representative in that action of the whole college of the apostles and governors of the church; of which power all the apostles were actually infeoffed. By which power of the keys is certainly meant, some administration in the church, which doth respect it as a visible society; in which sense, the church is so frequently called, as in that place—the kingdom of Heaven; and in all probability, the administration intended here by the power of the keys, is the power of admission into the church of Christ.”—STILLINGFLEET.

THE origin of power, both civil and ecclesiastical, has been much controverted; but the difficulty is not in the origin, but in the progression of it; for, every one must admit, who admits the being of God, that He is the origin of power: for there is no power but of God; and all lawful power is delegated from God. “For the powers that be are ordained of God.”

That question, therefore, is one of uncommon importance, the answer of which has been frequently and

eagerly sought; "by what authority doest thou these things; and who is he that gave thee this authority."

AUTHORITY, sometimes signifies nothing more than, good estimation and opinion; gained by wisdom and well-doing: but the full import of the term is, the power to command, to order, to compel, and to punish.

Authority is divided into legislative and executive: but ecclesiastical power is only executive; the legislative part, (in the strict and proper sense), belonging exclusively to Jesus Christ: all minor legislation in reference to the peace, purity, and order of the church, must be built upon the general legislation of Christ, in the New Testament.

"So that, ecclesiastical power imports no more than a right to govern a constituted society; but how that right shall be exercised, must be resolved, not from the notion of power; but from the nature of the constitution of that particular society." (Stillingfleet.)

Power, must however be commensurate with its object, whether that power be exercised in a family, a state, or a church, which object is to preserve order, peace, independency, and dignity.

The simplest rudiment of power, and the primary progression of it, is that which originates in the relationship of father to a numerous family; it then proceeds to that of master and governor.

Degenerate power, or abused authority, is tyrannical, oppressive, and destructive.

There is something delightful or painful, in every ex-

ercise of power : and those in authority are responsible for every exercise of it ; either to God or man, or to both.

The authority of the apostles, and first pastors was to teach and preach, and to disciple ; that is, to admit into the church (by baptism), to examine, rebuke and rule. "Go and teach all nations, (says our Lord) "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." and I appoint unto you a kingdom ; as my Father hath appointed unto me." and St. Paul says, "obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." And again, "remember them which have the rule over you ; who have spoken unto you the word of God." "These things speak and exhort ; and rebuke with all *authority*." "Let no man despise thee."

The Church is an ecclesiastical community, or spiritual kingdom ; for as there are civil matters, which concern us as mortals, with relation one to another : so there are also spiritual and divine affairs, which concern us as immortals ; and as related to a religious fraternity, or brotherhood ; which is a far higher alliance.

Where there is a kingdom, there must be a king, laws, constitution, governors, and the governed. If the church be represented as a kingdom, the ministers are the rulers. If it be represented as a body, the ministers are the active members of that body. If represented as a flock, the ministers are the pastors or shepherds.

We must observe, that all the subjects of this kingdom ; or individuals composing this body, the sheep of this flock ; “must consent to be governed by the laws and rules of this society, according to its constitution : for no one can be looked upon as a member of this society, but such a one as submits to the rules and laws of the society, as constituted at the time of his entrance into it.

“Further, that all voluntary societies, are founded upon the consent, and agreement of parties ; and do depend upon contracts and covenants made between them.

“But, though the act of consent be free, yet there is an antecedent obligation upon men, binding them to this voluntary consent. Erastus, and his followers, supposed that all discipline was from confederation ; or that church power lay in mutual consent.

“It is granted, church power does suppose consent ; but then, all christians are under an obligation, from the nature of christianity, to express this consent, and to submit to all censures legally inflicted ; ‘for the powers that be, are ordained of God ; and he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God ; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.’ ‘For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.’ ‘Wilt thou not be afraid of the power ? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.’”
(Stillington.)

Seeing then, that there must be laws in the church, as the kingdom of Christ, and penalties annexed to the

breach of those laws ; also rulers to inflict punishments upon the offenders : who more proper for the performance of this duty, than those who watch over the flock, and are accountable to God, as the overseers thereof.

If all be rulers, every man is *sui juris* ; and so there can be no society ; or, each man must have power over each, and that brings confusion, and is contrary to the exhortation, “be not many masters.”

There must then be some invested with power and authority over others ; to rule them in such things wherein they are to be subordinate to them, according to the spiritual nature and compact of the society into which they have entered.

Two things are implied in this—1. Power. 2. Order. By power, is meant, a right to govern : by order, the superiority of some, as rulers ; the subordination of others, as ruled. These two are so necessary, that there can be no civil society in the world without them.

For if there be no power, how can men rule ? if no order, how can men be ruled, or be subject to others as their governors ?

Here, several things must be carefully distinguished ; the power from the application of that power ; and the order itself, from the form or manner of government.

There must be a governing power in the church somewhere, and of some kind ; not only by virtue of God's own constitution, but as a necessary result from the dictate of nature, supposing a society.

But where this power must be lodged, and how it must be conferred or derived, (whether by succession or by free choice), is not at all determined by the light of nature; because it may be a lawful power, derived which way it may: the light of nature only determines that a constant power must be upheld and preserved, quite equal to the ends of government: but the word of God must be consulted to ascertain *with whom it is to be lodged*, and *by what means conferred*; whether by the civil government, succession, election, commission, delegation, or ordination.

1. Ecclesiastical authority is not conferred by the state; for it is distinct from, and independent of, the civil power. It is a power which men cannot give, nor take away. "My kingdom (says Christ) is not of this world." "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." And the apostle tells us, he received not his "commission from man, neither of man."

If Pastoral authority depended upon lay permission, for many ages it could have had no existence; and even now, in numerous places could have no exercise. The church has nothing to do with the sword, nor the state with the keys.

2. Nor from succession. The communication of pastoral authority by ordination of bishops in regular succession from the apostles, is not only held by many papists, but also by some in the church of England; who are using amazing and strenuous efforts, to rub up and circulate a number of obsolete popish notions, as strong and

undeniable arguments in favor of the apostolic rights and prerogatives of the establishment: and sufficient to crush the dissenters with their weight and grandeur; as the church of Rome endeavoured to crush them, by the same arguments, at the time of the reformation. It is said, unless it be admitted, that some persons have maintained and transmitted the right of ordination, there can be no ministry; for Christ cannot come again from heaven to call men; and no man taketh this honour on himself: indeed if any man may start up, and take upon him the sacred office, then farewell to either an efficient or lawful ministry.

(1.) I deny that there is any such regular succession. The succession which they style regular and uninterrupted, has been very irregular, interrupted, uncanonical, and marred by manifold schisms, heresies, and factions.

But little is left on record of many of the first bishops of the christian church; many of whom were distinguished for all evil, as Felix II., Viglius, and others. One pope cursing another, and undoing what his predecessor had done, as was the case with Formosus, Romanus, Stephanus, and others. Sometimes there were two popes, and sometimes none. Irenæus makes Clemens the third bishop, whom Tertullian determines to be the first from the apostles. Zepherinus was a montanist; Marcellinus sacrificed to idols; Honorius, a monnothelite.*

(2.) But if they could prove there was a succession from the apostles, what would it prove? that they must

* A primitive sect, who denied a future state.

necessarily have the *doctrines* and *influence* the apostles had? certainly not; for the Romish church, above all others, boasts of this apostolic succession. Do the Scriptures any where state, that we must beware, that all are false prophets, false apostles, and spurious ministers, who are not in the line of succession? Oh no! The Scriptures declare, "by their fruits ye shall know them;" and if we must judge of a tree by its fruit, many who claim this ordination, in a direct line from the apostles, are blind leaders of the blind, and although they have on sheep's clothing, they are ravening, greedy wolves. They are worldly men, without holiness or ministerial efficiency or success. The prophet speaking of false pastors, says, "they are dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving to slumber; a lie is in their right hand."

So that in the first place, this regular succession cannot be proved without great uncertainty, and admitting in the line some of the vilest and most heretical of men. Secondly, if it could be proved, it does not ensure that the true ministerial authority is thereby conveyed, for no protestant will admit Romish priests are true christian pastors, neither will the papists admit it, in reference to protestants.

(3.) But I advance beyond this, and assert, that if apostolic succession, and constant visibility of a church could be proved; it would rather prove such a church to be anti-christian.

By the church's constant visibility I mean, her never being concealed, from the beginning to the end.

We grant, there shall always be a true church upon

earth, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, so as utterly to extinguish or destroy it; and that while it is a true visible church, it shall be as a city set upon a hill; which figure is to shew that the true church of Christ, while it visibly exists, shall shine in truth and holiness.

It is no good sign, when the most learned and weighty defenders of episcopal claims are under the necessity of defending their rights, and maintaining their claims to office, on the ground of a succession which fully connects them with the "mother of harlots;" and that sooner proves them to be of that family, than the true and spiritual church.

We must admit that the head of the church has power to bring his hidden ones again to visibility and that he who called Saul from heaven, to be a chosen vessel, can restore to her, pastors after his own heart, who shall feed his people with knowledge.

Tertullian confesseth, "that there were many churches, which could not shew the succession, but could shew succession of doctrine, from the apostles, and that was sufficient."

The power of saving men's souls, does not depend upon the succession of persons, according to human institutions; but upon the apostolic doctrine, accompanied by the divine Spirit.

The *best* succession, then, is to succeed to the doctrine, work, spirit, and privileges of the apostles; to imitate

them in their labours and successes; carrying out their plans, and endeavouring to finish their work.

If any, notwithstanding all this, (out of a high conceit of episcopal claims), will refuse communion with such churches as claim no such succession, and yet are truly orthodox; or will account those, no ministers, who are ordained by presbyters; let such take heed, lest they be found guilty of schism.

3. True Ministerial authority is now (as it was in the days of the apostles) derived from a *divine commission*; “called of God, elected by the church, set apart by the elders.”

Having considered the origin of Pastoral authority, I proceed to consider its CHARACTER; and the EXERCISE of it.

The Pastorate is composed of elders. “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour; especially those who labour in the word and doctrine:” from hence it is inferred, that there are ruling elders who labour not, and others who do. This is the opinion of the Scotch Church; who in their book of discipline, say, “as there were in the Jewish Church, elders of the people, joined with the priests and levites in the government of the church—so Christ who hath instituted a government, and governors ecclesiastical, in the church, hath furnished some in his church, beside the ministers of the word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same, when called thereunto; who are to join

with the ministers in the government of the church ; which officers, the reformed churches commonly call elders."

In another place it is said, "there ought to be one, at least, both to labour in the word and doctrine, and to rule and preside in meetings for the managing of church affairs.

Others contended, that the primary power of the keys was given by Christ to the whole church, and that the synod or meeting of the church is the *ecclesiæ orta*: that the power of discipline or authority does not issue from the office of preaching and administering the sacraments ; or else none but ministers should have the power of the keys ; and not any could be joined with them ; because they derive their authority, by virtue of their ministerial office :—the drift and design of which is to prove, that ministers have all their power from Christ alone, and not from the church.

But they should know, that as they have their office, so they have their power. They have their office from the church immediately, from Christ *mediante ecclesiæ* : for they are chosen, tried, and approved by the church ; and by it designed to this office : and can exercise their power of discipline in no church, but where they are pastors.

But, admitting that view of the subject ; it must be granted by all, that the minister is the first elder, or *primus presbyterorum* ; the officer and representative of the church, possessing executive authority.

So that, if the controversy be only which power is primary or secondary—the lay or preaching elders, it must be the preaching elders:—

1. If we consider their commission, gifts and the promises made to them.

2. From their paternal character. The church is begotten by them through the gospel.

3. From the connection which must subsist between feeding and overseeing the flock. “Feed the flock of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.”

4. From the figures to which the church is compared; a flock, a vineyard, an army; and ministers, to the shepherd, the vine-dresser, the captain or chief.

5. From the permanent and immutable character of the ministerial office.

6. From the responsibilities of this office.

Those who give the primary power of the keys to the bishops, as the episcopalians, admit that pastors of particular churches have the executive power over them.

Those who admit that the church has the primary power of the keys, admit that pastors have the executive power, as officers and representatives of the church, above all other officers.

Connexionalists admit, that the pastors in council have the primary power of the keys; but that pastors have the executive authority over particular churches.

The Wesleyan polity appears to unite in itself, all that is excellent and useful in Independency, Presbyterianism, and Episcopacy. Our leaders and lay preachers

are stationary and resident; and in reference to many local affairs and regulations, and funds, are independent. The government, as a whole, is Presbyterian. Our Leader's meetings answer to the Kirk sessions; the quarterly meetings to the presbytery; the district meetings to the synod; and our conference to the general assembly. But we add to this a sort of episcopacy, in our chairmen of districts; who have the supervision of twenty or thirty preachers in the district.

The government also, of the Wesleyans, is of a mixt character. The Leader's meetings are composed of ministers and laymen, who are leaders, and stewards belonging to, and appointed for regulating the affairs of that particular church or society, in the town where they reside.

Neither the superintendants, nor any other ministers, shall give tickets of admission into the church, to any one, until recommended by a leader, with whom they have met at least two months on trial. Neither shall they expel any one until their guilt has been proved at a leader's meeting.

And before pronouncing of the sentence or exercising of discipline in difficult cases, the superintendant is advised to consult with his colleagues, and the most aged and influential leaders: after which the aggrieved may appeal to the decision of a district meeting.

This includes all that is implied in the power of the keys, which, in Scripture, is termed binding and loosing, which terms are of various interpretation.

But, as judgment passed upon any person is either against, or for him, that which is against him is binding ; that which acquits him, is loosing : the former is binding to punishment, the latter frees or looses from the bond of guilt.

“If he hear not the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican?” The heathen man and publican some take to mean, the greater and lesser punishments. The heathen man was quite out of the church ; the publican not entirely. The heathen man was a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, the publican was degraded. “What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven :” so that, though the true church hath not the sword, or any other active force : we find her censures shall be executed from heaven, and be more terrible than any inflicted by the sword of the magistrate.

Whatever was wrong in the seven churches of Asia, was charged upon the angels or pastors of those churches ; they must be responsible to Christ for whatever is remiss or wrong in doctrine or discipline.

Discipline should be exercised in a rational, grave, and affectionate manner. Among the Jews, when persons were excommunicated ; it was accompanied, or performed by the sound of a trumpet ; in the primitive church, by the tolling of a bell ; and the solemn monkish curse, is with bell, book, and candle.

What power and authority have true pastors, in reference to conferring spiritual blessings ?

Some have pretended to have the power, authoritatively to forgive sins, and to bestow grace, and the Holy Spirit; and that they have the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

It is indeed, taught in Scripture that the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit are requisite to qualify, and enable ministers to exercise their functions for the saving of sinners, and the sanctifying of the church; yet it does not thence follow, that any men are to be entrusted with the power of conferring those gifts and graces; (God only knows on whom to bestow them), unless they be persons who are infallibly guided and directed, (as were the apostles); in this case, they may bestow them authoritatively.

All "laying on of hands" therefore, since the apostles' days, is but prayer, and that is not constantly and certainly heard; only as the person for whom it is offered, may be fit to receive the gift, or blessing.

The only spiritual power and authority, which true and faithful ministers receive, is the power of faith and prayer, and a blessed and saving influence attending their labours; so that their preaching "is not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance:" therefore they turn "men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," that they may "receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, by faith in Christ."

The peculiar advantages of the pastors of the church, arise:—

1. From the full authority with which the church has invested them. "To preach the word; to be instant

in season, and out of season ;" "making full proof of their ministry." "Studying rightly to divide the word of truth," and giving to every man "his portion of meat in due season: and faithfully and constantly administering the sacraments.

2. This will generally promote ministerial ability, and aptness to teach, and to "mightily convince," "stopping the mouths of gainsayers;" treating with men as ambassadors, for God; praying them to be reconciled to him, "in Christ's stead:" greatly encouraging, comforting, and thus winning many souls.

3. There are some special promises and encouragements held out unto the faithful pastors; "unto whom this grace is given, to preach among the gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The true pastor has a commission from God to "feed the flock of" Christ, and to bless them in the name of the Lord. He has received "weapons, which are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds." He does not go "a warfare at his own charge:" but God strengthens him, and stands by him; blessing and delivering him; and continues with him, as long as he continues with God; and every service, and every sacrament will be a channel of grace to some; or (as the apostle says), "the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death."

It will be well here to notice, the RESPONSIBILITIES of "the Pastoral Office."

To prevent an injurious exercise of pastoral authority,

there must be other officers and tribunals, as a check to keep all right ; or if any improper acts of discipline should take place, that they may be brought to answer for their conduct.

The Episcopalians refer the conduct of their pastors to the supervision of the bishops: the Presbyterians to the synod, or general assembly.

If the Independents should have cause of complaint against their pastors ; they have no higher court to which they can appeal.

The Wesleyans have more checks and guards upon the authority of their pastors, than any other body of christians. First, Trustees are a check upon doctrines. Second, Leader's meetings upon expelling or admitting members. Third, District meetings are a higher court, at which the pastors are examined annually, in reference to their spirit and conduct, and their exercises of discipline during the past year ; at which meetings, charges may be brought against any pastor who has not conducted himself aright : and the decisions of district meetings are again examined by the highest court in methodism, the Conference.

The members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, in general, understand, and are regulated by their excellent and approved constitution.

It is an evil thing, and justly reprobable, when rulers exceed the limits and bounds of the law, by which they are to govern ; and when they manage and regulate things according to expediency ; or their own will and power. This has sometimes been alledged against Wesleyan

Ministers, but in very few instances has it been established.

It is also equally wrong, for any pastor to neglect enforcing discipline, through fear or favour ; and thus to let down their office, and the interests they are placed to guard.

There must be a point, where human responsibility stops ; and then there is a sense in which these highest decisions will be judged by public opinion, and at the tribunal of God.

But the under shepherds must be responsible to the great shepherd ; to the word and will of Christ, to his instructions and reproofs ; and they shall be rewarded or punished by him.

Faithful pastors are a great blessing to the church, and ought to be cheerfully obeyed and revered. It is a great sin "to speak evil of dignities ;" to "despise dominion ;" and a mark of reprobation to be heady, high-minded, lovers of themselves."

The Scriptures exhort every "soul to be subject to the higher powers ;" to submit "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake."

Jeremy Taylor says, "if inferiors would not be too busy in disputing the prudence of their governors, and the convenience of their constitutions ; undervaluing their persons, slighting their government, and unloosing the golden cord of discipline, it would be well.

"He who is confident of his own understanding and reasonable powers (and who is more, than he who thinks himself wiser than the laws ?) needs no other devil in the neighbourhood ; no tempter, (but himself), to pride and

vanity ; which are the natural parents to disobedience."

Where there are a plurality of ministers, or co-pastors, (which is frequently the case among the Wesleyans), they are to be united in counsel ;—the younger (according to Scripture) submitting to the elder ; who is such in years or office. But this constitutes no distinct order of superiority, but of labour : yea, they should all "be subject one to another ;" and individually trying which could be most humble, active, and useful.

To conclude. The church is a spiritual kingdom. This kingdom is to be governed by the laws of Christ, primarily ; and by laws of order, peace, and purity secondarily ; which laws must have penalties connected with the breach of them. To enforce these laws, and inflict these penalties, there must be government and authority ; and as all government and authority must terminate in a point, and as there cannot be many masters, the senior pastor must rule over the church ; not indeed without checks and being responsible to higher and larger courts.

Again, the church is compared to the human body, the spirit and life of which is diffused throughout the whole : but, although the power of acting and moving is in every member ; that power is exercised to purpose, only when it moves in subjection to the head ; for the seat of authority, or the power that consults with, and then employs, all the power of the body, must necessarily be in the head ; and should the heel be lifted up in opposition to the head, it would be a revolt.

But it must always be kept in mind that the government

of the church is purely spiritual, and must never employ civil pains and penalties. The highest punishment it can inflict is expulsion from church membership ; beyond which, church discipline can touch nothing.

Therefore the power of the keys is placed as distinct from, and quite dissimilar to that of the sword. The only employment of keys being that of opening or shutting. The metaphor is supposed to be derived from Isaiah xxii. 2. "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut, and shut and none shall open."

The key in the above passage signifies dominion, power, government. David was a type of Christ, and his house and kingdom of the church. This figure shows that the walls of discipline must be kept up ; and that persons entering into the church must enter at the right door, and no other way ; now where the walls are broken down this cannot be, for the church then becomes a common and a desolation. The power of the "keys" tendeth much therefore, to the preservation of piety, purity, unity, and edification ; and is a means to enlarge the kingdom of Christ and to further our eternal salvation.

Opening the door to admit new members into the church (if suitable for admission) is very delightful. But on the other hand, the most difficult, painful, and responsible part of "the Pastoral Office" is putting away and cutting off the dead member, that the living body be not injured. This must be inflicted upon all who scandalously and openly sin ; and on such as habitually shew tempers and

dispositions opposed to peace and purity ; on them who hold and propagate dangerous and destructive errors ; and upon such as continue under deep-rooted and contagious disaffection to the members or constitution of the church to which they belong. The only consolatory reflection, which a minister (performing this painful part of his duty), has, is this—that discipline is appointed by the great head of the church ; and is frequently overruled for the good of the expelled member ; and is perhaps, the only means of benefiting the person, on whom the painful discipline takes place : so that all ecclesiastical power is intended for salvation, and not for destruction.

“And I will give unto thee (says Christ to Peter), the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Now Peter may truly be considered as the first pastor, for our Lord commissioned him to “feed his sheep,” and to “feed his lambs.”

Pastoral Authority may therefore be considered as essential to the office, and as descending through the office ; but the particular modification of that authority depends upon the constitution of the church, in which it is exercised.

A constitution is the settling of an order of superiority and subjection in a community, whether civil or ecclesiastical.

Where this constitution is to be found, and what it is, has given being to unnumbered volumes of controversy,

since the Reformation ; from which have originated the different orders of church government.

Some think, this constitution is to be found in the Old Testament, in the discipline of the Jewish church. Others in the New Testament ; as seen in the platform laid down by the apostles. A third contend, that this constitution is to be gleaned out of both the Jewish and Apostolic churches. And lastly, many wish to fetch a constitution for the church, from civil constitutions.

A middle path has been adopted by many learned divines ; and also by many sections of the church. They admit that general rules for church government are laid down in Scripture, from which minor regulations may be drawn, as necessity may require ; for the peace, good-order, purity, and prosperity of the church, and God's glory.

Many eminent and learned Bishops in the church of England embraced this middle path ; who considered episcopacy as prudential and necessary, but not of apostolical and divine institution.

And the Wesleyans do not admit, that any form of church discipline is unalterably fixed in the Holy Scriptures ; and yet, they would not admit anything into their constitution, contrary to those general principles, laid down by the apostles. "Let all things be done decently and in order." "Let nothing be done through strife, and vain glory." "Let all things be done unto edification." "Let no man despise thee."

It is amazing, to think, that rational beings living in the same age, can hold opinions so widely extreme ; so

that while one class of men are elevating the ministers of the gospel, as the representatives of Christ, and as being entitled to all the reverence and honour, which mortals can render ; and in many instances, to a sort of divine and superstitious worship : others are grown so wise and pure, that they cannot think of giving any honor to those, whom they consider, neither so wise, nor so holy as themselves ; and who are far beneath them in point of worldly possessions : with these spiritual levellers, numbers have united and formed a junto, the professed object of which is to strip, humble, and degrade the pastors of Christ's flock.

The Wesleyans think, that the pastors of Christ's flock, who are entirely given up to the work, should neither be lords nor mendicants, neither superstitiously exalted and honoured, nor servilely debased and degraded.

“It is therefore the duty of the members of the church (says Wesley), to obey and submit themselves to those that watch over their souls. Now the things which they enjoin must be either enjoined of God or forbidden by him or indifferent. In things forbidden of God, we dare not obey them ; for we are to obey God rather than man. In things enjoined of God, we do not properly obey them, but our common Father. Therefore if we are to obey them at all, it must be in things indifferent.

And it is the duty of every private christian, to obey his spiritual pastor by either doing or leaving undone, anything of an indifferent nature ; anything that is in no way determined in the word of God.”

CHAPTER III.

THE WORK OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

"A Pastor must sooner or later convert sinners if he sincerely and earnestly calls them to repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless though filled with indignation against sin, with compassion toward the impenitent, and with gratitude to Christ, he should like Saint Paul, in proportion to his strength, wrestle with God by prayer ; with sinners by exhortation ; and with the flesh by abstinence."—FLETCHER.

ALL seem to be convinced, that the WORK of the "Pastoral Office" is very important, difficult, and responsible ; and that too many have the office, without possessing the qualifications ; or doing the work.

It has been agitated ; first, whether the "Pastoral Office" be a relation to the ministry, or to the church. Congregationalists contend for the latter : but why not admit it relates to both ? The "Pastoral Office" connects us with the church by ministering to it, "feeding the flock:" membership connects us with the church, but not with the office. Second; whether the "Pastoral Office" stands connected with a particular church, or with

It must evidently stand connected with the church in general ; if we consider, that the members of it are called generally to the Ministry ; and are generally qualified for feeding the flock of Christ.

If the "Pastoral Office" stood connected only with a particular church ; and should that church (from any caprice,) see fit to discard its pastor ; his call and qualifications must lead him to seek another : and if another cannot be found, he should endeavour to gather one out of the world, by going "out into the highways and hedges" and "into the streets and lanes of the city ;" and should compel them to come in, that God's house may be filled.

Otherwise, his call is only from a particular church, and not from God : or he is only qualified for a particular church, and is therefore debarred from changing it. The general call includes the particular, but the particular excludes the general.

We therefore conclude, that pastors are called to "feed the flock" of Christ generally. This is a principle acknowledged by Connexionalists : so that the whole life, influence, and talent of the connexion is in circulation. "All are yours, Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas."

It has been observed, that various instrumentalities are employed in the church of Christ ; *pastors, teachers, deacons, helpers, &c.* Gifted individuals, in different ways, and at various periods, who were not in the "Pastoral Office," have been permitted to preach and exhort occasionally ; but as they did not give themselves wholly to the work, they were never called, or considered Ministers

or Pastors, for such denominations follow and designate the ordinary, and not the occasional acting in the work. A general course of acting is necessary to the making of a general title proper to any person, in any worldly vocation.

So that the church has called them Lay Teachers, Local Preachers, Deacons, &c.

Every christian has a general call to usefulness, to the utmost extent of his talents; but some are called in a special manner, to renounce their secular vocations and worldly prospects, and give up all for Christ and his church.

The preaching of these gifted individuals has been termed, preaching *ex dono*; and that of regular ministers, preaching *ex officio*.

Two extreme views are taken of this subject. The first is, that the preaching of laymen is altogether unlawful, and very dangerous. The second, that no persons but laymen, so gifted, should be employed in the "Pastoral Office;" and that making men ministers by profession, leads necessarily to priestcraft.

1. It must be admitted, by those who do not admit of lay teaching, that a General may give an exhortation to an army; or a judge from the bench, to a prisoner at the bar; from the example of Joab, (2 Sam. x. 12.) who exhorted the army to "be of good courage, and play the men; for our people, and for the cities of our God; and the Lord do that which seemeth him good." Abijah made a long discourse to Jereboam and all Israel: and Jehosaphat said to the judges, "take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Where-

fore, now let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it ; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts, &c." See also Joshua's exhortations in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters of Joshua.

2. Because when pastors are selected they must be "apt to teach ;" and unless they be allowed to give a word of exhortation, or preach before they officially do it ; this could not be known. By occasional preaching, gifts are discovered and improved.

3. Besides, all the talent in the church must and may be employed very advantageously to the church and to the world in this, and in every other way that can benefit mankind.

4. Look at those bodies of christians who do, or do not employ lay agency ; and you will soon perceive who prosper most, and are most honoured of God. Look at the Wesleys. What an amazing work has sprung from Wesley and a few laymen : for at the commencement only a few, who were so termed, were his coadjutors.

"Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand ?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land."

EFFICIENT PREACHING may be considered as the most difficult and important part of the "Pastoral Office."

In the primitive church, preaching was diligently, zealously and constantly exercised ; and in those times pastors

were impressed with the necessity and responsibility of preaching the Gospel. Men that were employed in the church then, did not consult their own ease or honour : nor did they think it sufficient to *pay others* to do their work, that they might sit still ; necessity was laid upon them ; yea, “ woe ” was unto them, “ if *they* preached not the Gospel.

PUBLIC PRAYERS were not then looked upon as the most important part in christian assemblies ; and to be placed far above preaching ; but the “ stewards of the mysteries of God,” were to “ preach the word,” to “ be instant in season and out of season.”

And is it not a great pity that now, two such excellent and necessary duties should ever be put at variance, and the one exalted above the other ? But if one must be put above the other, it is preaching ; for Christ appointed preaching as the grand means of feeding the flock, and of saving the world.

The objects to be accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel, and the evils that are opposed to it are of such strength and magnitude as to lead the apostle Paul to exclaim, “ who is sufficient for these things ? ” and earnestly to request the prayers of the church in his behalf : “ that the word of the Lord might have free course, run, and be glorified.”

Prayer should always accompany, and follow after preaching, to ensure a blessing upon it. Those who preach the gospel have calls for prayer, more numerous and pressing, than God’s people are generally aware of.

It is not sufficient merely to instruct the ignorant and disorderly, they must be moved also; and if possible deeply affected; or all we say will be to little purpose.

Many are convinced of their duty, yet find in themselves no disposition to follow their convictions. There is no wonder therefore, if those preachers, who aim only at satisfying the reason, or enlightening the conscience, are not eminent for conversions.

If man was in a state of innocence, light would be all he would require; he would then have no dark and restless enmity within, opposing truth and righteousness: but fallen man has, which makes his recovery so difficult; and which calls for every influence to be exerted, both human and divine, to bring about his salvation. The instruction of our Lord is "compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." And how is this to be done? but by enlightening their minds, convincing their judgments, silencing their reasonings, awakening their consciences; and by pouring a rich, varied, and divine influence upon their hearts; softening and melting, piercing and breaking the adamant within.

O! the heart must not be forgotten. It must not remain motionless under the word, and be left without impression.

It may be objected: that men are determined in their choice of what is good, not by any impulse, but by instruction, and by clear and full conviction. Why, then, were passions seated in the soul? and why are the passions said to be the springs of action? and why, in conversions, do fear and sorrow, disgust and desire take so prominent a

part ? That preacher aims but at half his work, who aims only at instruction, or even conviction ; and never strives to produce deep and heartfelt emotion ; and whose word is habitually without pathos and unction.

Every sermon should either aim at awakening the sinner ; comforting the penitent ; supporting the feeble-minded ; spurring forward the lukewarm and loiterer ; reclaiming the wanderer ; or leading forward the healthy christian to perfection.

What St. Bernard said of a christian's life may be also said of discourses from the pulpit. "To shine, to glitter, to sparkle, without any good effect is to no manner of purpose ; to inflame with the heat of mistaken zeal, or blind devotion is of little significancy. Join light and heat at once, both to touch the heart and convince the reason, and your work is effectually accomplished." St. Augustine says, "when we have been speaking to the people on this subject, has not such a flame been kindled out of it, as has fired the coldest hearts and animated them to works of mercy, by the hopes of an immortal recompense."

Not that the work should be performed throughout with wildness and fury, unbecoming a due decorum ; but should rise, and the vehement strain not be continued too long ; or it will harden instead of melting. Many parts should be delivered in a humble and moderate style : there is a proper time and place for the great assault, that is to lead the sinner captive to the foot of Mount Sinai, and then to the foot of the cross.

It may again be objected—if ministers perform their

work in this manner, they will disturb and too much affect the conscience, and many weak persons will not attend their preaching ; and many obstinate will be offended. So be it, for by abandoning you they honour you exceedingly : their flight being a plain confession they “ dare not come to your light, lest their deeds should be reprovèd ;” or “ they should be converted,” and you “ should heal them.” But good men, sincere penitents, and anxious enquirers will hear you gladly.

Perhaps it would not be out of place to give a specimen of plain dealing from St. Chrysostom ; representing the terrors of God’s wrath.

“ Remember the tribunal before which we shall appear ; the burning lake into which the wicked will be plunged ; the eternal chains wherewith they will be fettered ; the outer darkness to which they will be doomed. Remember the gnashing of their teeth, which will be caused by their despair ; and the never-dying worm which will without ceasing, prey upon them. But God (you say) is good. He is indeed, undeniably good. What then ? Is all I have said a fable ? Is the punishment of the rich man, who despised Lazarus ; and the calamity of the virgins, on whom the door was shut, all a story ? Are then the threatnings against those who shall refuse to entertain Christ Jesus, but as so many menaces ? Is what we read of the man who shall come to the marriage-feast without a wedding garment ; is this, and the reception he will meet with, so much idle talk only ? Or is that so too, which is said of his condemnation, who rigorously exacted from his fel-

low-servant the payment of a small debt ; when one much more considerable had been remitted to him by his master ? Is the assurance that impure persons will be tormented in that place ‘ where the worm dieth not,’ and the flames ‘ are not quenched,’ no more than a mere dream ? You will pretend, perhaps, God is satisfied with these threatnings only, and will go no farther ; but dare you utter so horrible a blasphemy ? The contrary I have made evident to you, both by the actions and expressions of our Saviour ; and if you are not sufficiently convinced by what shall happen hereafter ; let at least, what is past persuade you. For can you affirm, that the judgments of God, which have hitherto appeared, and the many terrible effusions of his wrath upon mankind, are but so many bare menaces ? Who was it that sent a deluge on the earth, and covered the whole world with waters ? Who was it that destroyed almost the whole race of mankind ? that showered down fire upon Sodom, and shot forth thunder on the cities of the wicked ? Who was it that drowned the whole army of Egypt ; and destroyed six hundred thousand Israelites in the desert ? Who opened the earth under Korah and Dathan ; and reduced to ashes the faction of Abiram ? Who was it that struck seventy thousand with the pestilence, for the sin of David ?

“ Shall I speak here, of particular chastisements, which God hath inflicted upon different persons ? Of Cain who was punished for the murder of his brother ? Of Achan, who was stoned for concealing privately some of the spoils of Jericho ? Of the forty children, devoured by beasts,

whom the weakness of their age could not excuse for condemning the Prophet.

“If you consider further, what God has done since the gracious dispensation of the Gospel; you will see in what manner God has treated the Jews,—that the extremities they have been reduced to, exceed all the miseries, which, till then, had been experienced in the world. And to put it out of question, that they suffered all these evils from the hands of Christ himself; ‘but those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them bring them hither, and slay them before me.’

“Again. Perhaps it is your misfortune to be incredulous after so many demonstrations; and to be without belief of hell-fire. To be so you must be persuaded that the devil himself is not punished; for the express words of Jesus Christ are, ‘depart from me into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’ If there is no such fire, there is no suffering for the devils; but if they are tormented in these flames; we too who have been disobedient and unbelieving shall suffer with them.”

Such was the preaching of the christian Fathers; and can the pastors of the present day do wrong in imitating them? Certainly not.

There is no resisting a discourse like this, it steals insensibly upon the soul and acts with, (I know not what,) easy violence upon the heart and mind. So far is the Preacher from fearing to alarm and stir the consciences of men, that he makes it the principle business of his ministry; and employs all the strength and beauty of his genius, all

the vivacity of his imagination, all the extent of his memory; in a word, all the powers of his soul, in order to accomplish this object.

The true Pastor must always keep in view the design and end of his ministry:—To “feed the flock of God;” and to “pull down strong holds.” The food which he provides, therefore, must not be chaffy, nor the weapons of his warfare carnal; but, on the contrary, his food must be nutritious, and his weapons “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.”

The Pulpit was never designed to be a pedestal on which to display the learning, genius, or even the eloquence of man.

In the Pulpit Ministers should not seek human applause, but Divine approbation; not to entertain, but save their hearers.

It is well for those, who, before they entered the ministry were so highly favoured, as to sit under the discourses of those who were “workmen that needed not to be ashamed.”

In the Methodist Connexion, we have examples of the *simple* and *earnest*;—the *studied* and *eloquent*;—the *pathetic* and *sublime*.

Who does not rejoice to have heard the Apostolic BENSON;—the masculine CLARKE; the noble and elevated, powerful and impressive WATSON? And though these gems, have fallen from the head of our Connexion; these “burning and shining lights” quenched in death;

even now we have models of pulpit eloquence, which every young minister would do well to study.

As the "Pastoral office" is one of such vast importance, connecting itself with the spiritual and immortal interests of men, and the future triumphs and glory of the church ; is it not requisite that every thing that can be done, by man and means should be done for its perfection, that our pastors may indeed be "wise Master-builders; laying a good foundation," and building upon it, not hay, straw, and stubble ; but "gold and silver and precious stones ;" and whose "ministrations shall be clear and full, majestic, harmonious, and efficient."*

Pastors are God's gifts to the Church : and shall we not respect the gift for the giver ? They have been greatly honoured of God, by being made "the savour of life unto life" to fallen men.

1. The church was *gathered* out of the world by the preaching of the Gospel : "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." A Gospel Ministry is the day of God's power, the rod of God's strength, "the seed of the kingdom."

* "General declamations and reflections do little in a popular audience ; the Preacher must enter into detail. Nothing can penetrate but what is pointed. He may also indulge in a certain degree of diffusiveness. He who passes rapidly from one thing to another is not likely to impress or indeed even to inform the majority of his audience. To affect them, he must commonly DWELL upon the thought a little ; even with an enlargedness that may seem needless, and with a repetition in other words and exemplifications that may go for tautology with persons of quicker apprehensiveness. So that what he failed to accomplish by the first stroke has often been done by the second."—JAY.

2. The Church was *reformed* by Preaching: in the Catholic Church, at the time of the Reformation preaching was almost set aside. Luther and his Coadjutors revived, not only frequent preaching; but the preaching of a present, Justification by Faith alone, without moral or ecclesiastical works; protesting against the corruptions of Rome, and making the Holy Scriptures the only ground for faith and confidence.

3. The Church was *revived* by Preaching; the preaching of the Wesleys, Whitfield and others. When they began to preach extempore, and out of doors, in a lively and simple manner, a present, free, full, and constant salvation.—God honoured the word, poured out His Spirit; and the effects of their labours continue to this day.

4. Preaching is designed to enlarge, preserve, and perfect the church.

The world is yet, in many parts, (some of which are civilized) without true religion; and that which can alone benefit them, is a preached Gospel:—For “the Gospel must first be published among all nations.” And St. John in his Apocalyptical vision saw “the angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred, people and tongue.”

How important then, is the “Pastoral office!” both to the Church and the world; and what necessary advice and encouragement is contained in the Apostle’s exhortation! “Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly;

not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, (or overruling,) but being ensamples to the flock." And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

THE SACRAMENTS are divinely instituted rites which shadow forth in visible symbols some mysteries of Redemption. The administration of these rights in a peculiar manner belongs to the Pastoral office, so that an itinerant Gospeler who has no church or churches over which he presides and to whom he administers the ordinances must be considered as an Evangelist. This seems to have been the situation of the first Methodist preachers.

Mr. Wesley says in his sermon on the ministerial office "the great high priest of our profession sent apostles and evangelists to proclaim glad tidings to all the world; and then to appoint pastors, preachers, and teachers to build up in the faith the congregations that should be formed. But we do not find that ever the office of an Evangelist was the same with that of Pastor frequently called elder or bishop. He presided over the flock and administered the Sacraments; the former assisted him and preached the word either in one or more congregations."

We cannot prove from any part of the new Testament or from any author of the three first centuries, that the office of evangelist gave any man a right to act as a pastor or bishop. In 1744, "All the Preachers had their

first conference, but none of them dreamed that the being called to preach gave them any right to administer the Sacraments. And when that question was proposed—in what light are we to consider ourselves? It was answered, as extraordinary messengers raised up to provoke the ordinary ones to jealousy. In order hereto, one of our first rules given to each preacher was, you are to do that part of the work which we appoint: but what was that work? Did we ever appoint you to administer the Sacraments to exercise the priestly office? Such a design never entered into our mind; it was the farthest from our thoughts. The Rev. H. Moore differed from Mr. Wesley on this point, and observed to him, “Sir, you know that the evangelists, Timothy and Titus were ordered by the Apostle to ordain Bishops in every place and surely they could not impart to them an authority which they did not themselves possess.”*

Preaching the gospel, however, must be considered common to both Pastors and Evangelists in the present day; every Pastor should unite with his office, that of Evangelist, a converter of souls, a breaker up of new ground, but every Evangelist cannot be a Pastor, because he is breaking up new ground and forming or endeavouring to form new churches; but has soon as God has made him instrumental in forming a church or churches, he is

* The Wesleyan Ministers were not invested with all the rights of the Pastoral office until they administered the Sacrament; nor could they be considered as any thing but a supplementary church till then.

then at liberty to become a Pastor and feed the flock, administering the ordinances unto them. Unless he feel it to be his call to pursue that line of things and go on forming new churches, then others should be appointed to take the Pastoral care of them.

So I think, in the commencement of the Methodist Societies, Mr. Wesley should have selected from his evangelists, such seniors as he thought most qualified for the Pastoral office. The only apology for his not so doing was his conscientious desire not to make a schism in the Established Church, or separate in any manner from it more than he was compelled to do.

But in the course of time the intimations of providence and the growing necessities of the connexion rendered it necessary for the Wesleyans to become a distinct church, separate from the establishment, and her Ministers to assume all the pastoral rights and functions, and yet cultivating the most affectionate feelings towards, and rendering all the assistance they can to the establishment.

BAPTISM is the initiatory right into the Christian church, as circumcision was into the Jewish; and it is said to be a seal of the covenant we enter into with God. When we submit with our children to baptism the bough is broken off from Paganism and every twig should pass through the water in entering the church of Christ; two extreme views have been taken of this ordinance, the Roman Catholics think that children dying without Baptism are annihilated, and many of the Ministers of the established church believe that children by it are really

and fully regenerated and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. While many hold these ultra views, the Quakers and some others look upon it all as mere ceremony or figure and neglect it entirely.

We must form a proper estimate of its importance to qualify us sincerely and solemnly to administer it. A middle view is safe. Baptism is an ordinance of religious dedication to God, a public avowal of Christianity, an outward sign of our depravity, and the necessity of inward and spiritual grace to fit us for heaven. It also has a relative sanctity attached to it, "Now are your children holy;" it also brings them into contact with such ordinances, influences, and covenant engagements, that if followed and believed in, will make us "God's children, and final inheritors of the kingdom of heaven."

I shall not enter upon any refutation of this Doctrine, but only say that Dr. Doddridge's great rule applies to all fundamental errors which mar the Gospel. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Whatever is opposed to salvation by faith, is not true. Now Baptismal regeneration is opposed to this vital doctrine, therefore it is not true.

The Sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER, when stripped of all superstition is designed to bring faith into immediate contact with the atonement. It is faith which draws salvation, strength, and comfort from the Sacrament, "For whoso eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood hath everlasting life; and Christ has promised to raise him up at the last day." Pastors having therefore to transact business of such spiritual and awful importance in reference to the

Divine Glory, the extending and establishing Christ's kingdom. They ought to administer the ordinances in the most solemn and effective manner.

Another part of the "Pastoral Office" is THE EXAMINING OF CHILDREN, and giving them suitable instructions and advice ; for children should be considered as lambs of the flock or catechuemen.

The importance of bringing divine truth early to bear upon the minds of youth, is strikingly set forth in one of Tillotson's Sermons.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? Whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast; for precept must be upon precept, and precept upon precept."

"Hearken unto me (says David) ye children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Children should be taught by pastors to know God, and their obligations to him, to fear, love, serve and honour." But this does not excuse *parents* from training and disciplining them morally and religiously; it is their duty to supply any lack of service, and co-operate with their ministers, in calling upon their children to remember now their Creator in the days of their youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw high, when they shall say we have no pleasure in them."

Children are tender, and easily wrought upon; apt to be moulded into any fashion: they are like the moist and soft clay, which is pliable to any form; but soon grows hard,

and then no deep or good impressions can be made.

It is very difficult to make impressions upon age, or to mar the deep impressions made upon young minds.

“When good instruction hath been neglected in early life; a conceited ignorance doth commonly follow, taking possession of, and obstructing all the passages through which knowledge and wisdom should enter into us.”

It has been lamented, that the gospel begins with men too late; its power is seldom brought to bear upon them until the mind is poisoned by error; stupified by worldliness and dissipation; bad principles, (like so many enemies) have got possession of the soul; which they mightily defend against the approaches and power of truth and grace. For “if our gospel be hid, it is hid to to them that are lost;” “in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of” Jesus “Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

How important then, is, it for pastors to attend to the young; who for many years are under powerful restraints, and gracious influences, while things are in their proper season.

Pointing then, to the children of the members of the church; and those training in our schools; the command of Christ to Peter, might be sounded in every pastor's ears. “Feed my lambs.”

Another part of their duty is PASTORAL VISITING. In this department of the pastoral work; itinerants can-

not compete with stated ministers: the one having so much larger a field of labour than the other. Stated ministers only preaching two or three sermons a week, must of course, have much more time to devote to pastoral visiting than those who preach six or seven sermons weekly; and walk or ride many miles a day.

But this deficiency, is more than made up, by two things.

1. By the assistance of a number of Leaders; who are men in trade upon the spot; in every town, village and hamlet, and who assist the ministers, by meeting ten or more of the members of the society weekly; and giving them suitable instruction and advice; who also visit any who are sick, or negligent.

2. The quarterly giving of tickets, by this means the ministers of the word, and pastors of the church, exercise a supervision over all, both Leaders and members, examining into their experience, and the attention of the leaders to their classes; by this means the Wesleyan members may all be personally seen and instructed by the ministers four times a year.

But added to this, they endeavour to visit with punctuality, the sick and feeble, and those who are wading through deep waters at their own habitations; and of late, great efforts have been made to promote a regular, complete, and constant plan of visiting the members from house to house, which is a desideratum in the Wesleyan body.

If a town was divided into districts; and if a minister was appointed to visit the members in a district, one day every week, instead of going into the country that day to

preach a sermon, the whole of the members in the largest towns, might be visited annually, or perhaps twice a year.

This work is one of painful self denial, but it is one that would amply repay both the pastor and the flock.

Beware, O man of God, of sloth and self-indulgence ; of all men you should be the most active and self-denying. Like your Lord go "about doing good."

The exercise of DISCIPLINE, (another part of the pastoral work,) or the executing of the laws and regulations of the body, is often difficult and perplexing. "The care of all the churches;" the scriptures therefore, lay it down as right, that "he who rules well, especially if he labour in word and doctrine, is "worthy of double honour."

Discipline is the squaring and fitting of the stones for the spiritual temple, the casting off of the shapeless stones, which cannot be wrought or squared ; and placing the pillars and ornamental parts in their proper positions.

Discipline was intended to be as a fan to separate the chaff from the wheat; to "thoroughly purge the floor," and to promote the health, harmony, and growth of the body. It should be administered with wisdom, honesty, gravity, fortitude, sympathy, and love.

"It was the sin and ruin, (says Baxter) of many of the clergy of the last times, to please and comply with *them* they should have reproved and corrected, by unfaithfulness in preaching and neglect of discipline.

"The neglect of discipline hath a strong tendency to the deluding of souls ; by making them think they are Chris-

tians, that are not ; while they are permitted to live in the reputation of such, and be not separated from the rest by God's ordinance ; and it may make the scandalous think their sin a tolerable thing, which is so tolerated by the pastors of the church.

"We thereby corrupt christianity in the eyes of the world ; and do our part to make them believe that christianity is but an opinion, and that Christ is no more for holiness than Satan ; or that christianity enacteth no more for holiness, than the false religions of the world ; for if the holy and unholy are all permitted to be sheep of the same fold, without the use of Christ's means to difference them ; we do our part to defame Christ by it, as if he were guilty of it, and as if this were the stain of his precepts."

The angels of the seven churches were reprov'd for the evil permitted in those churches ; and God will "hate" those pastors who suffer "the doctrines of the Nicolaitans" to remain in the church ; and he further threatens to punish unfaithfulness in exercising discipline.

But the "Pastoral Office," in its right and full exercise, is not without its DISCOURAGEMENTS, DIFFICULTIES, and DANGERS. Success will never be so extensive as our wishes ; and many times we shall have to mourn, that we laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought ;" or cry, "who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed."

Sometimes your motives will be impugned ; and your plans of usefulness opposed ; and your warm heart meet

with deathly chillness; but discouraged you must not be, for if you are made sorry, who shall make God's people glad. The faithful Pastors must press through good and evil report; as deceivers, and yet true; and appealing to the heart-searching God, be enabled to say, "he who judgeth us is the Lord."

THE DIFFICULTIES of the "Pastoral Office." It is difficult rightly to divide the word, and "give to every one "a portion of meat in due season:" indeed, some only require milk, and not meat, for they are not able to bear it.

There is often great difficulty in administering comfort, lest we say peace, peace, when there is no peace; or in neglecting to comfort those who mourn in Zion; to whom we are recommended to administer consolation. It is also difficult to employ human sympathy, so as not to put it in the place of divine consolation.

Human sympathy is a frail evanescent thing, and too often over estimated until deep suffering convinces us of its feebleness. It may smooth the surface of human sorrow, but its deep dark depths must remain troubled, until divine consolation with its soothing power says, peace be still.

"Let not your heart be troubled, said our Lord to his disciples; believe in God, believe also in me." Faith in God, and in his wise and good providence, is an antidote against outward trouble. Faith in Christ, in his divinity, atonement, and fulness is an antidote against all spiritual trouble. The only true sources of comfort then to which

mourners can be directed, are the cross, the promises, the throne of grace, and the kingdom of glory.

There is a difficulty in so administering reproof, that it be not ineffectual on the one hand, or overwhelming on the other; for when reproof does not humble the individual, and give a blow at the root of the evil, it is in vain, or perhaps worse, for it may harden, or may lead to anger, offence, and division; and if it be too heavy it may swallow up the individual in over much sorrow, so as to depress and discourage him for ever. Reproving and railing differ nearly as much as day and night.

There is difficulty in managing revivals, to preserve the good, and avoid the evil; for but few revivals are free from human passions, and sometimes wrong and extravagant excitements.

But it is difficult to lay any restraints on such ebullitions of feeling, lest good be prevented, the active members grieved, and the young converts made to stumble. It is perhaps better to overlook a hundred little indiscretions, than injure one soul.

But should the vital doctrines be impugned, and rank and dangerous error be spreading; or enthusiasm mightily prevailing; a kind endeavour to correct these abuses is needful. *

It is difficult to cultivate both active and studious habits, the one having a tendency in time to prevail over the other. These habits being so opposite, the danger is of being either ever on the whirl, or else of becoming so studious,

* See Dr. Clarke's note on I. Corinthians. XIV. 33, 40.

that they have little of the diligent Pastor or active superintendant about them; yet these habits difficult as they are, must be maintained. We may cultivate habits of thought in the midst of activity; and glean knowledge and experience from almost every person and occurrence.

The DANGERS of the "Pastoral Office" are many and great; for pastors being actively employed in overthrowing Satan's kingdom, he doubtless strives hard to work their overthrow; that it may be shouted in Gath, and published through Askelon, that the beauty and strength of Israel has fallen.

Besides the dangers of powerful temptation, they are in danger of performing the work of God deceitfully; by being either smooth tongued, or yeilding to a censorious and harsh spirit; or of seeking by using great swelling words of vanity, to be men-pleasers; while others, seeing the evil and danger of such a course, become careless and negligent.

The vain and ambitious ought ever to have sounding in their ears:—"seekest thou great things for thyself, seek them not" "he that exalteth himself shall be abased."

Beware, O man of God, of formality; of losing the true spirit and influence of the "Pastoral Office;" for by the number and frequency of your spiritual engagements there is danger of becoming lukewarm, half hearted, time serving.

Beware of Satan coming to you as an angel of light, with strong delusions, to lead you into mazy labyrinths;

keep close to the word; remember the great essential principles of religion are like their divine author, "the same to-day, as yesterday, and will continue the same for ever."

Religion always aimed at the preparing men for death and heaven. Religion always consisted in pleasing God; no man in his fallen and unrenewed state can please God. Then religion must consist in a change of heart or in being converted, made a new creature, according to their dispensation.

This renewing power was always exerted through faith, "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and indeed the way of faith in Christ has been the way to God under every dispensation; Abel, Noah, Abraham, and Job came through typical blood to the blessings of religion. Under the law, "without blood there was no remission, and every thing was cleansed with blood, so that in this sense, Christ is the lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.

Lastly, faith has been always attained and exercised in some kind of ordinance or offering; so that we ought to fear novelties in religion.

"Stand in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk ye therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls," "keep a single eye, a self-re-nouncing will;" be not actors of a part, but feeders of the flock; soul savers, glorifying God in your bodies which are his; be more anxious for life than light, for grace than knowledge, for substance than ornament; get the strengthening, comforting, and sanctifying power from every discourse yourself first.

We should be fully devoted, and every morning seek for the brightness and breath of God ; to drive away from our spirit every thing dark, dead, or sinful ; and strive every day to walk before the Lord, and be perfect ; being emphatically the lights of the world, the salt of the earth.

The "Pastoral Office" entitles those who perform its duties to pecuniary support.

Various have been the schemes proposed by speculative reformers, for the support of pastors. Some have recommended, that ministers should be obtained from that class of society only, which possesses an independent property ; that their entire inducement to enter into the sacred office, might be from zeal and love to the Saviour, benevolence to mankind and the honour of the work.

Others think that the state should provide a competency for their support ; and a third, that men called of God, and qualified for the work should be selected, whatever may be their rank or station in life ; and should be supported by the voluntary contributions of the people who receive the benefit of their labours.

But there are many places where there are multitudes as "sheep having no shepherd" who must have a free gospel sent at first, or they will never have it at all.

So that the Wesleyans as a connexion have a surplus fund, arising from the voluntary subscriptions of the large and wealthy circuits ; and indeed of every circuit, to assist the necessitous and to extend themselves to regions beyond.

The persons employed in the sacred office under the law

received an emolument; I do not bring this forward as a proof that Gospel Ministers should be so remunerated; but only to shew that there is nothing wrong in the principle or God would not have appointed it.

The rule of *equity* requires it; for (says St. Paul) "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" so a Pastor wholly devoted to the work, is worthy of the wages; there being a value received by his flock, for his hire.

It would be *unjust* to receive the labour of any individual without rewarding it. "He that reapeth receiveth wages." "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"

No "man goeth a warfare any time at his own charges;" because the warfare is not for private ends only, but for public and general good; and therefore the public find him accoutrements; and allow him pay, even so when ministers go forth to fight the church's battles, the church ought to support them.

The apostle appeals also to custom and precedent; "do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? and then reference is made to the custom of not muzzling "the ox that treadeth out the corn." "So hath God "ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," for "who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock."

The propriety of remunerating ministers might be urged from the necessity and advantage of it. Such a

ministry would be enabled "to labour more abundantly" "in season and out of season," and more efficiently too : for study, learning, and much reading are necessary, so to preach the gospel in large places, where the people are well informed, as not to disgrace Christ, and the christian religion.

But some have urged that St. Paul wrought with his hands at tent making, to minister to his necessities, that he might not be burthensome to the churches.

The poverty and unsettled state of the church might justify the apostle in doing this for a short time, but he contended that it was voluntary, and that his claims were as valid as those of the other apostles.

Many illustrious individuals have frequently imposed upon themselves, indignities or self-denials ; humbling them below their state, and privileges, for the sake of encouragement and general example.

So Julius Cæsar would go bare-headed, and on foot, both in the hot sun-shine and in foul weather, before his soldiers to inspirit them.

The only confirmation I shall bring forward on this point, is from Benjamin Keach ; who says, the word of God calls "not only for the maintenance of Ministers, but for such a plentiful contribution, as may make them partakers with you in all good things.

1. "The Minister is bound to attend wholly and only upon his calling in the ministry ; and not "entangle himself in the affairs of this life" that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier ; and nothing but real

necessity may admit the contrary; his whole time and strength is little enough to be employed, in the work and service to which he is called. "He must give himself to the ministry of the word and prayer; and "continue in reading and meditation." Thus he is excluded from the means of providing for his own subsistence, and surely it is not meet he should be left to conflict with the thorny cares of a necessitous condition, whilst those to whom he ministers have the means to prevent it.

2. "It is no less the duty of a minister than of other men, to provide for his family, that they may not be exposed to a thousand miseries and temptations when he is no more. I confess, (of all men in the world;) a covetous, raking disposition, worst becomes a minister; but we greatly mistake if we think he must divest himself of the due affection of a husband towards his wife; and a father to his children; or that the fruits thereof, which are justly commended in others should be esteemed a fault in him.

3. "He is under a special charge to "use hospitality" and to be an example of charity and compassionate bounty to the poor, and therefore ought to be provided for, so as to be capable of giving proof of the possession of these graces by exercising them as occasions may offer."

And at the close of this chapter I would remind the church that the field is large, "the harvest great, "the labourers few; "pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more labourers into his harvest."

And I would recommend to every Pastor to prove his

divine vocation, "by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned" and endeavour to imitate the Apostles in spirit, in zeal, in labours, in character, in conversation, and in conduct: and although, he may find many impediments, weaknesses, trials, and conflicts; the promises, supports, and consolations shall be sufficient for him.

To conclude. The work of the "Pastoral Office" is a great work, a solemn work, an awfully momentous and deeply responsible work; which no natural or acquired qualifications alone, can enable any individual successfully to perform. Supernatural and divine aids are requisite; "our sufficiency is of God." Every pastor must be a subject of Christ's kingdom; a living branch in the true vine; the temple of the Holy Ghost. His head must be anointed with the unction of the Holy One; his heart filled with the constraining love of Christ; and the hands of his arms made strong that he may not run in vain, nor labour in vain; and be clear from the blood of all men.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXCELLENCY OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

“From the infancy of the church to the present hour, preaching has more aroused and engaged the attention of mankind, than every thing else which was not miraculous.”—DWIGHT.

EVERY work, ordinance, and institution of God, must be good. This is illustrated and confirmed in the earth, in the elements of nature, and the senses of the human body.

For God to have worked immediately and directly upon the soul of man, and removed his darkness, guilt, and sin, would have superseded both Divine revelation, and human instrumentality. But it would have been incompatible with the nature of man, and with the plan of salvation; so far as it is connected with the testimony of man, and faith in his report.

A ministry of Angels would also be unfit for the work of the “Pastoral Office;” for they could not, without human weaknesses and sympathies, know how to succour and support men, and there would be something unnatural and astounding in such an ordination.

The excellency of the "Pastoral Office" may be seen:—
In the spirit it breaths. In the materials it employs.
In the influence it secures. In the blessings it imparts.
And in the glory it promotes.

The appointment of men, therefore, to the "Pastoral Office" "of like passions with" themselves who were once, like others, "in the horrible pit," and in the devil's arms; but who have been awakened and humbled, and have drunk the wormwood and the gall, and have "groaned being burthened with guilt; when the arrows of conviction stuck fast in their conscience, and drank up their spirits; and when Christ's blood has been applied; and peace and joy and love have overflowed their soul, they become (in point of feeling and zeal) the best instruments God can employ to save others.

The constraining love of Christ is the moving soul of all successful ministerial efforts. This is the sap flowing through the living branches; the baptism of fire; the secret of success. This leads them to deny themselves. Self is no longer the governor and reigning influence in the spirit, but the love of Christ now regulates and stimulates all the affections. It constrains them to universal and constant obedience; and implants such tender and deathless sympathy for souls, and such zeal for God's glory, and the extension of Christ's kingdom; that we may say it is the first and grand qualification for the "Pastoral Office."

The grand question therefore, nay the only one that our Lord put to Peter, was, "lovest thou me;" and then he

he gave him the commission—"Feed my sheep." "Feed my lambs."

It is a part of a wise economy, that the gospel should be proclaimed by the living voice. The human faculties the voice, and aspect, must become the living vehicles of divine truths. And man, himself redeemed, is to be the honoured instrument of saving man. All men are not qualified for this work, and all are not equally qualified. The rule is, the fittest instruments are the best; and the proportion of success shall in general be in proportion to the measure of qualification.

Knowledge, learning, and eloquence are the general qualifications which include aptness to teach.

But four other things must be added. A spiritual and powerful perception of the truth; for there is a difference in the degree of spiritual perception and feeling. A prominent regard for the Divine glory should be the strong ruling passion. Yearning compassion for the souls of the guilty and miserable. A living and abiding sense of responsibility. These will generate a strong and deep emotion, and a fixed and humble dependence on the grace and Spirit of God.*

Pastors, are called ANGELS; because they are "ministering spirits," messengers. They are taken from all secularities and are constantly employed in meditating upon and worshiping God, and glorifying and serving him by feeding, and enlarging his flock. †

* See Dr A. Reed on an efficient ministry. † See Rev. I. 20.

They are **STARS** * because they are lights in darkness and derive their light and glory from Christ the sun of righteousness. These stars, like that which the wise men followed, will lead all who follow them to Christ the bright and "morning star;" and God has placed these stars in the church for the same reason as he placed the stars in the firmament, viz. "for signs and for seasons;" for beauty and brightness; to guide the mariner in the darkness of night to his desired haven, "and heavenly influences shed, on all the world below."

They are **WATCHMEN**. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls O Jerusalem." We "watch for souls as they that must give an account." They are called watchmen on account of the charge committed to them; and their responsibility, to warn and alarm the church; to keep God's word and ordinances uncontaminated and uncorrupted; therefore ministers of the gospel must be wakeful and active. They must "not sleep as do others," but be on their watch-tower. If it were possible for them to have the hundred eyes of the fabled Argus; and the hundred hands of Briareus, they might keep them fully employed: however, as Mr. Wesley says, "they must always have their wits about them."

They must watch over the spiritual interests of the church; and tend their flocks, lest thieves and robbers enter the fold, "grievous wolves not sparing the flock."

Watchmen must study the "signs of the times," and

* Revelation, I. 16, 20.—XII. 1.

give intimations to the church. When she asks the watchmen, "what of the night?" Then they must shew what are the evils and dangers coming; and the trumpet must be blown, that the church may be prepared to meet and overcome its enemies. Watchmen are exposed to much danger and hardship; they are often beset, and basely abused by "the sons of Belial," in the faithful discharge of their duty. On these and similar accounts, Pastors are styled watchmen.

They are compared to **CLOUDS**. In Isaiah, v. 6. God says concerning his church,—“I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.”

Clouds without rain is the similitude which St. Jude employs to set forth false teachers; shewing their vanity, inconstancy, and emptiness.

So true Pastors are clouds pregnant with fertilizing showers. They may differ in colour and brilliancy; some may be more beautifully shaped than others; but every true minister is well charged with rain for watering, refreshing, and fertilizing the church; making the plants in God's garden to revive and grow.

“Lo the promise of a shower,
Drops already from above;
And the Lord will shortly pour,
All the Spirit of his love.

They are **STEWARDS**. “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries

of God." "Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." 1. Cor. iv. 1, 2.

1. Because Stewards are the overseers of the goods and affairs of their Lord; so Pastors are Christ's servants in this respect.

2. A Steward has a great charge and trust reposed in him. Valuable and excellent things are committed to his care, with this understanding—that they are to be employed, or administered with fidelity and impartiality; seeking not his own good and honour thereby; but the good and honour of his Lord and master. So Christ's stewards must not seek their own, but the things of Christ.

3. They may employ others to assist them, but they are the responsible persons; and must give an account of every thing done during their stewardship.

They are also called **FATHERS**, spiritual fathers; because souls are "begotten again to a lively hope," through their word and instrumentality. "For though ye have (says St. Paul,) ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers." Those who are converted to God under any minister's word; accompanied by God's blessing, are said to be his "joy, and crown of rejoicing." And they may adopt the words of the apostle. "We live if ye stand fast in the Lord." "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children." 1. Thess. ii. 11.

They have a paternal character and authority. "Now we command you brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus

Christ, that you withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly."

As fathers, they should be honoured and revered by the members of the church. "Rebuke not an elder (though he may be worthy of blame) but intreat him as a father."

As fathers, they should set before their children an example of wisdom, holiness, sobriety, spirituality, and active zeal.

But the most exalted and honourable titles, given to pastors are those of **RULER** and **AMBASSADOR**, which shew that they are invested with plenipotentiary powers from God, and that they represent the person of Christ in negotiating peace between heaven and earth, and terminating the warfare between God and man, by reconciling them to God.* Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." 2. Cor. 5. 20.

It has been urged that the term ambassador belonged exclusively to the apostles, and that it ought not to be applied to any pastor now. If then the term has ceased to be applicable to the ministers of Christ, the office and its work together have ceased; then the embassy is at an end, the work of reconciling men to God must have terminated; otherwise, the true minister is yet "an ambassador."

St. Paul found some in the church at Corinth, who wished to pull down the apostles; and reign as kings

themselves ; to whom he addresses this cutting irony. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us ; and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ. We are weak but ye are strong ; ye are honourable but we are despised."

We see then the excellency of the "Pastoral Office" from its spirit ; and the titles and figures, by which the scriptures set it forth.

Let us now endeavour to ascertain its excellency from **THE WORK ITSELF**. To take care of the life, and to superintend the happiness of any creature is important. When hundreds of human beings' lives depend upon the skill and vigilance of a captain of a ship, and he brings them safe through storms, rocks, and sands—how important his charge—and how excellent his management !

But to take care of the church, which is the purchase of Christ's blood, and gathered by the Word and Spirit of God, and sealed with the Holy Seal is the most excellent and important thing in the world. What can be more important than to be intrusted with the care of souls ; the immortal interests and happiness of God's people ? To be employed in preparing the adornings for the heavenly bride ? To be guardians of God's jewels and vessels of honour ? To be the angels of the churches, and the glory of Christ ?

The "Pastoral Office" is no sinecure ; not an office of learned leisure, but of care, labour, and conflict.

Baxter says, "we are seeking to uphold the world, to save it from the curse of God; to perfect the creation, to attain the ends of Christ's redemption; to save ourselves and others from damnation; to overcome the devil, and demolish his kingdom; and set up the kingdom of Christ, and to attain, and help others, to the kingdom of glory; and are these works to be done with a careless mind, and slack hand? O see then that this work be done with all your might. Study hard; the well is deep and our brains are shallow, think what your work is. To preserve the church from the influence of error, and keep it pure; to shew the line of demarcation between the church and the world. They keep up the hedge of spiritual discipline between the wilderness and the garden of the Lord, which, if broken down, lays it open to common desolation; and God's temple becomes a den of thieves, God's palace a sty of swine."

The excellency of this office is seen WHEN WE CONTRAST THE TRUE AND FALSE CHURCH. In the false church the pastors are not such by vocation, but by profession. They lack the supernatural gifts and qualifications; although many of them have talents, genius, learning, and wealth, together with confidence, strength, and power.

"And their roaring shall be like a lion; they shall roar like young lions; yea they shall roar and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it."

"And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea; and if one look unto the land, behold

darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof."

Yea look into the land where the false church is the only church, what do you see? Any spots of spiritual verdure? Any lovely moral creation, any sunny Goshen in the midst of surrounding darkness? O no! "look into the land and behold darkness and sorrow; and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof."

They may have huge cathedrals, lengthened ceremonies and tedious rites: multiplied forms, and gorgeous processions; but what are these; when error and superstition run through the whole, but the "marks of the beast" the REQUIEM over a spiritually dead church?

The excellency of the "Pastoral Office" may again be seen IN THE INTENSE DESIRES AND PRAYERS OF NUMEROUS NATIONS, HAVING NO FOLD, AND NO SHEPHERD.

"See where o'er desert wastes they err,
And neither food nor feeder have,
Nor fold; nor place of refuge near;
For no man cares their souls to save."

For there are many begging and praying like the man of Macedonia, "come over and help us."

Look at them. They are godless, christless, hopeless, and helpless; without sabbaths, sanctuaries, ordinances, and ministers.

"Where there is no vision the people perish." These habitations are dark, bloody and debauched. O! how

righteousness exalts! and how sin debases any people. "Hear and your souls shall live," for the entrance of the word (the scripture tells us) gives life.

Politicians and philosophers have thought and taught, that the moral disorders of the world are to be healed by the influence of legislation, good government, and education, by ameliorations and civilizations.

But what have these things done for France in modern times; and for Greece and Rome in ancient times? If the adjustment of rights, and balancing of powers and interests:—if theories, speculations, and spoliations—overwhelming of thrones, and breaking in pieces of constitutions could have healed the world, it would ere this have been a paradise. But these can only affect the forms and extrinsic qualities of things; they cannot change or perfect the essence of them. Lead can never become gold, though its form undergo thousands of changes. "That which is of the earth is earthy."

We ought to esteem good government; and in some respects, "the earth shall help the woman." But after all, good government alone cannot heal the nations.

Can the influence of civil laws? No. Penal laws cannot be applied, unless to offences known and proved. It is therefore evident that secret crimes are beyond the cognizance, and consequently the cure of civil laws: and so is every spiritual crime, or wrong principle and motive.

Nor can a learned education, a knowledge of the arts and sciences remedy the evils of mankind. It has pleased the Almighty, in his wisdom, that man by worldly wisdom

should not know him. "Where is the wise, where is the disputer of this world; has not God made foolish the wisdom of the wise: as it is written, he taketh the wise in his own craftiness." "The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God." Knowledge may improve the mind and manners, civilize and elevate society; but it cannot bring peace to a guilty conscience, or purity to a depraved spirit; nor renovate the fallen mass.

If the means that are employed to save the world were of human devising; or of a dubious speculative character; men might smile, or even sneer with contempt. But if the means are of Divine appointment; and if God has pledged his character upon their efficacy and ultimate success; to sneer and ridicule is to pour contempt on the Almighty.

Christianity is the grand catholicon; the healing balsam; the light of day; the spirit of might. The genius of christianity is universal benevolence, and triumphant energy.

It has been a matter of some difficulty of late, to give to the three most important instruments their relative position. Whether the circulation of the Scriptures, the establishing of schools, or the ministry must hold the first place in the world's salvation.

The Scriptures must certainly, in point of authority, stand first. But in point of active saving efficacy, the ministry; for it is the preached word that is appointed by the great Head of the church, for saving all who believe. But they must all be united and go together; as in vegetation, the seed, the rain, the sun-shine, and the preparation of the

ground unite to produce the harvest ; remove one and the whole is a failure. So in saving mankind, the ministry, word, and schools must all be connected with God's blessing. So then the ministry alone is nothing, the Bible nothing, schools nothing, but God who gives the increase must have all the glory.

The apostle argues with great force and propriety, when he says, " how can they call on him, in whom they do not believe ; and how can they believe in him, of whom they have not heard ; and how can they hear without a preacher ; and how can they preach except they be sent."

In this passage is shewn the necessity, nature, and obligation of the ministry. All the reasons which rendered it necessary for the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, are yet in equal force, to induce the church to send forth ministers to the heathen. The argument is forcible and demonstrative, and ought to be convincing. Without calling upon the true God aright, there can be no salvation ; without knowledge and faith, which are communicated by the ministry, how can they call upon him ; and how can a ministry rise up among the heathen ; how then can they have a ministry except it be sent them.

So that the only revealed way to heaven for fallen creatures is by faith in Christ : the only way to faith in Christ is the ministry, or the word accompanied by the Holy Ghost : and the only way for dark and distant lands to have the word and ministry, is by being sent. So that God has made the church the almoner of his truth, ministry, and every other spiritual blessing necessary for saving

the world. How appropriate therefore are the words of prophecy. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings."

For Truth is designed to be the great emancipator of the souls of men ; the regenerator of society ; the renovator of the world ; the guiding star to conduct us to order and felicity. So that as in creation, the chaos of confusion and darkness was by the word and Spirit of God organised and formed into a world of order, light, and life :—so the moral and spiritual chaos in this world, by the preaching of the gospel, and the influence of the Spirit, shall become a world of spiritual order, light, life, and glory.

The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation;" it is the vehicle of Divine influence; the Spirit's trumpet; the Spirit's hammer; the Spirit's sword. None are too high for this to fetch down; none too low for this to raise them up. Every true pastor can say, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."

The gospel is most clearly and divinely appointed for saving men. It has triumphed over the most stupid, wild, savage and violent; as well as the most infidel, refined, and philosophical, and why suppose that it will not finally and fully save the world.

The "Pastoral Office" then is designed to remove ignorance and apathy, hardness and unbelief; by rolling the thundering curses, and launching the awful lightnings of God's wrath, over the spirits of a guilty, slumbering world :

and when awaked and penitent, to exhibit to them God's love, Christ's cross, and the promises of a present, free, and full salvation, to every believer.

The excellency of "the Pastoral Office" may be seen if we consider THE ULTIMATE DESIGN and FINAL RESULTS of this office. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to decieve; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Ephesians iv. 11—16.

The pastors of the church are to take a prominent and effectual part in beating down all error in the church; in banishing superstition, in bringing the godly from all their schismatical factions and discords. "Until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God." To reclaim, to comfort, feed and establish, to re-

strain, and yet stimulate, by all that is sweet in the covenant, elevating in mercy and transporting in glory. To maintain truth unclouded, ordinances uncorrupted, and the church separated from a polluting and benumbing world. To feed and sustain the flock, to succour the tempted and support the tried. Speaking the word of God with all authority.

They are to take a prominent part in bringing the church in the end of the world to its perfection and fulness; "for in the fulness of the dispensations of time, he shall unite in one, that is in Christ, all things in heaven and all things on earth, even in him."

"For brass I will bring gold, and for iron, I will bring silver; and for wood, brass; and for stones, iron; I will also make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness." These passages refer to the increasing perfection of the church, and to the perfect and glorious state to which it shall be brought. The latter may be considered as designed also, to shew the temporal prosperity which shall be connected with the final perfection and glory of the church.

Is false religion always to monopolize the wealth and learning, power and greatness of the world? Is the true church always to sit in the dust? O no! When the church can fully employ these things for the glory of God and the good of mankind they shall be given.

The true Zion shall soon hear a voice saying, "put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments O Jerusalem." Many mistaken and timid people, when the church shall be making her transit from the humbled

to her exalted state will cry out "Antichrist!" "the whore of Babylon!" because they know not how to distinguish between the adornings of the bride and the trappings of the whore.

Then shall the church be "clothed with the sun" and "the moon under her feet, and upon her head, a crown of twelve stars."

"In these blest days, the saints shall flourish fair;
Peace in abundance, like a river flows;
The nations of the saved walk in the churches light,
And into her, Kings glorious honour bring."

The whole world must be subjugated to Christ and to the glory of God and all flesh see his salvation. "For every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess; (whether of things in heaven, or things on earth, or things under the earth) that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

To bring about this "the gospel must be preached among all nations; for in the apocalyptical vision, St. John tells us he "saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people;" and then immediately on this extended preaching of the gospel, another angel announced the fall of Babylon.

When the Redeemer is about signally to increase his kingdom, he will raise up and qualify ministers for the work; "who shall be men of large hearts, eloquent tongues,

and public spirits ; shining in golden holiness, and going forth with undaunted courage and zeal for God : inspired with burning love to Christ, and the souls of men ; inclined to prefer the good of Jerusalem to their chief joy." What do we see already ? " What hath God wrought ?" Men willing to run all hazards by sea and land ; to venture all that is dear to them in the world ; and content to spend and be spent to increase the kingdom of Christ.

Thus we see how closely the " Pastoral Office" is connected with the church's glory, and the world's redemption.

Lastly. We see " the excellency of the " Pastoral Office" in THE PRESENTING OF THE SAINTS, PERFECT BEFORE THE THRONE OF CHRIST, TO RECEIVE ETERNAL GLORIFICATION. " Whom we preach warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. i. 28.

This is the greatest reward, and highest honour of the faithful pastor ; to present the seals to his ministry, and the souls for his hire, before the eternal throne, who shall be his " joy, and stars in the crown of his rejoicing." O that none may " run in vain, neither labour in vain."

CHAPTER V.

DEFECTIVE AND CORRUPT PASTORS.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.”—**MATT.** vii. 15, 16.

THE most excellent things when corrupted, become the worst; and of all things, the corruption of religion, and the ministers of religion, are the most corrupt.

Perhaps it might be considered more curious than profitable, to pursue the enquiry—whether the visible church first became corrupt, and so corrupted the “Pastoral Office,” or, whether the order of deterioration was from the Pastors *to* the church.

The only important point is to shew, that when the “Pastoral Office” exists only in name, without the spiritual qualifications; without the care, vigilance, self-denial, and labours; its efficacy and utility are lost, and it can only be assumed by such persons, because it is an honourable and lucrative profession: or merely for literary, political, or worldly purposes.

The “Pastoral Office” must therefore, ever be kept

from degenerating into a secular profession ; and must maintain its high and heavenly character, as a divine vocation.

We are called upon by Christ, to “beware of false prophets which come in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” Many things may corrupt and enfeeble true ministers ; but some are represented as false apostles, essentially wrong ; wolves even inwardly, ravening, hungry greedy wolves. Pretty shepherds, to protect the flock.

When ministers are ignorant and unenlightened they are corrupt Pastors. Every man ought to understand, and be able to make others understand, what he undertakes to teach. If a man unacquainted with mathematics or classics was to undertake to teach them ; every one would be struck with the absurdity of his profession. And so a man being acquainted with one kind of knowledge, will not enable him to teach another. Christ therefore by the Spirit selects his ministers, not from academies of learning, but from the true, vital church. We do not deny, but that education, and a theological training for young ministers may be beneficial and beautifying ; but it is not essentially necessary. The education of ministers is not from apostolic injunction, but from a prudential regulation of the church ; which may be good or evil in proportion to the piety and care taken in their training.

The Scriptures however, caution the church from laying hands suddenly on any one. “Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”

The apostles themselves were for several years, as disciples under our Lord's personal instruction, before they were appointed to the office of apostles.

The apostle Paul therefore exhorted the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts." "I believed, and therefore have I spoken. We believed, therefore speak."

Pastors are not called merely to teach the science of divinity; although this is part of their employment: but also to teach, the working of repentance, of faith, and of love; to reconcile sinners to God, and to prepare believers by true holiness for everlasting life.

It is wrong to say, that learning necessarily corrupts the ministry; nor would it be right to say that without classical and mathematical learning, ministers cannot be efficient and useful; for facts prove, that many both with and without the learning of the schools, are "able ministers of the New Testament," "not of the letter only, but of the spirit;" "whose praise is not of men, but of God."

"But it is supposed by many, (says a pious clergyman,) that good sense, diligence, and learning are all that can be wanting, to give any man that knowledge of the scriptures, which is requisite for personal salvation or public usefulness. The idea, of any thing more being necessary, is discarded as being absurd and extreme. To talk of being illuminated by the Holy Ghost, and of being taught of God, is likely to be offensive to those who boast of their learning and erudition, and are proud of their intellect; let such learn the meaning of these words. 'If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him be-

come a fool that he may be wise ; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.' We say not this with a view to the disparagement of human learning, which may be improved to the best account, but as a caution to those who are in danger of valuing it too high, and of arrogantly supposing they want no other aid." (T. Robinson.)

Another says "divine knowledge is more to be likened to spiritual sensation than intellectual science."

So that when ministers are so ignorant and unenlightened as to be termed "blind leaders of the blind," they are corrupt pastors, obtruding into things they know not, "a lie is in their right hand."

Political agitators are corrupt pastors. When men are Ishmaelites in spirit, their soul is all discord. It was not to disturb and destroy the peace of nations, that the Prince of Peace came into the world. Nor is it by wrath and by wars that his kingdom shall be directly extended. "Think not (says a Scotch Divine,) that struggling with your rulers, and striving with your neighbours will promote the prevalence of peace. But to promote peace on earth, and good will among men, should be the aim and end of true ministers." And though in one sense, Christ came not to bring peace upon earth, but a sword ; the sword was to be steeped in the blood of a non-resisting church, not used by the church." "Christianity (says Stillingfleet) is a religion which is next to a miracle men should ever quarrel or fall out about ; much less that it should be the occasion, or at least the pretence of all that strife and bit-

terness of spirit; of all those contentions and animosities which are at this day in the christian world. But our only comfort is, whatever our spirits are, our God is the God of peace, our Saviour the Prince of peace, and that wisdom which is from above is both pure and peaceable."

Those Pastors who hold strange and dangerous doctrines, which are heretical, are corrupt pastors.

Some persons are too ready to call others heretics, fanatics, legalists, or antinomians; because they press upon the conscience with earnestness and zeal, the duties of mortification and self-denial; and a thorough subjection and obedience to the will of God, even while they at the same time teach the freeness of his grace, both in justification and sanctification; and others, who give a bold prominence to Christ are called solidians or antinomians.

It is intimated by the apostle, that the corrupt teachers in his day would not consent to wholesome words, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, but turned to profane and vain babblings; doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth. "There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Again. "There shall be false teachers among you, who shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and many shall follow their per-

icious ways, by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." When the grand foundation truths are perverted, and the glorious news of salvation by grace through faith are beclouded or mutilated; then, says the apostle, "if any man, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

And whoso teaches an antinomian gospel, by precept and example, giving licence to any to break one of Christ's commandments, shall be called least in the kingdom of God.

Those who are in the true and scriptural sense, schismatical are corrupt pastors.

"Now (says St. Paul) I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrines which ye have learned, and avoid them: for they are such as serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. And by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." One would think there was no need of saying, that schism differs from a revival of pure religion. But they may be mistaken, and however pure, peaceable, and useful those may be who are so revived, and wish to live up to their professions; the lukewarm, master party may succeed in turning them out of the church, and brand them as schismatics. Now whatever may be said, where the true spirit of love is, a schismatical spirit is not; for disturbers and dividers are always full of bitterness and enmity. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men

arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts xx. 29, 30.

Bigotry and sectarianism are opposed to the catholic spirit of the "Pastoral Office," and therefore are corrupting even to the true Pastors.

It is opposed to the very spirit and design of the gospel, which is unity and love ; for it is a rending of itself away from every other body of christians, and standing separate and alone, frowning with hostile defiance on all other branches of the church. "Let us be afraid (says the holy Fletcher,) of a sectarian spirit, we may indeed, and ought to be more familiar with the professors with whom we are more particularly connected, just as soldiers of the same regiment are familiar with one another, than those who belong to other regiments. But the moment this particular attachment grows to such a degree, as to make a party in the army of King Jesus, or of King George, it breaks the harmony which ought to subsist between all the parts ; and hinders the general service which is expected from the whole body. In what a deplorable condition would be the King's affairs, if each colonel in his army refused to do duty with another colonel : and if instead of mutually supporting one another in the day of battle, each said to the rest—I will have nothing to do with you and your corps ; you may fight yonder by yourselves if you please ; I and my men will keep here by ourselves, doing what seems good in our own eyes ; as we expect no assistance from you, so we promise you that you shall have none from

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us. And you may think yourselves well off if we do not join the common enemy and fire at you, for your regimentals are different from ours, and therefore you are no part of our army. If so absurd a behaviour were excuseable, it would be among the wild, cruel men, who compose an army of Tartars or savages; but it admits of no excuse from men who are the followers of him, who laid down his life for his enemies, and exhorts his soldiers to love one another as brethren."

Let us then, peculiarly beware of inordinate self-love. It is too often the real source of our divisions. Who can tell all the mischief done by this ingenious and base tempter? Who can tell all the mysteries of error and iniquity, which stand upon the despicable foundation of the little words, *I, me, and mine*; my church, my chapel, my party, my congregation, my connexions, my system, my favorite opinions, my influence, &c. To all these egotisms let us constantly oppose those awful words of our Lord; "except a man deny himself, he cannot be my disciple." Till we cordially oppose our inordinate attachment to our own interest and party, "we sacrifice to our own net:" in our public duties, and even when we preach Christ it is to be feared, we do it more out of contention than out of real concern for his interest. Preaching until we foam at the mouth, against other sects, parties, creeds, and ministers, is only like the zeal of Jehu, when he slew the priests of Baal; only to establish the kingdom in his own hands.

"Let names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Christ alone be all in all."

A word only is necessary to shew, that worldly and unfaithful Pastors are not chosen of Christ nor approved of by him. The apostle says "for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things." "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, the Lord hath said, ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, no evil shall come upon you." Jer. xxiii. 1, 2, 17.

Priestcraft is a general term for all that is superstitious, vile, and tyrannical in the "Pastoral Office." This term however, has been generally given by infidels, to all religious teachers without any distinction of time, place, or person; they count them all as of a lineage with idol priests.

The term PRIEST is not properly applied to a true minister of the gospel, for there is nothing in the "Pastoral Office" that justifies the application of the term. It is not only true the papists have adopted and defended the term, but also several celebrated writers of the church of England; we need only notice Dr. Hicks, who is much admired and is a great authority with the modern Puseyites. In his

two treatises, one on "the Christian Priesthood" the other on the Dignity of the Episcopal order;" he contends, that the "Pastoral Office" is a priesthood; and that the sacrament is a lifting up of sacrifice; or the lifting up of the atonement in a semi-popish sense. To confirm this, he brings forward a vast mass of learning from the Fathers; but he gives no definite sense in which we are to understand how pastors offer sacrifice in the sacrament; indeed it is a specious piece of learned mysticism, calculated to confuse and mislead. We can only answer him in a summary way:—

1. Christ only can offer meritorious sacrifice, and plead his atonement as our great high priest.

2. Believers only can present it in faith, so as personally and savingly to receive its benefits; in this sense, every believer is a king and a priest.

3. How then can pastors officially offer it, without obtruding into the office of Christ, or the personal acts of believers. They can in no way lift up Christ but doctrinally, as "Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness" as an object of faith, that "whosoever believeth in him, might not perish." So that the work of the "Pastoral Office" is reconciling men to God, not God to men; Christ is the only and alone saviour that can reconcile men to God.

Priestcraft is now generally applied to priests of false religions and to anti-christian priests, who must (in spite of every kindly feeling) be called priestcraft, which is manifest:—

1. By their juggling, or assuming mysterious and divine powers and rights; as the power of transubstantiating the elements of bread and wine; the power of unconditional absolution and benediction; power over the fate of departed spirits, &c.

2. Tyranny and cruelty, which is exercised over the minds, bodies, property, and liberty of any who dare to break their chains. What a dark and bloody page does the history of priestcraft present.

3. Ambition and mercenary aims, seen in their titles, robes, personal aggrandisements and kingly commerce; with them godliness is gain, and worldly pomp is official dignity.

4. By lowering down the standard of truth; and making the broad way as the way to heaven. By elevating superstition until it becomes rank idolatry. In short as the "Pastoral Office" is the most elevated and beneficial under heaven, so priestcraft is the most oppressive and pestilential out of the bottomless pit.

We shall conclude with a few remarks from Mr. Wesley. "How dangerous and deadly is priestcraft. What if the prophets prophecy deceit? If they cause the people to err from the way? What shall be done, if they point out as the way to eternal life, what is indeed the way to eternal death; and exhort others to walk as they do themselves, in the broad, not in the narrow way? How terrible is this when the ambassadors of God turn agents for the devil! When they who should teach men the way to

heaven, do in fact teach them the way to hell ! These are like the locusts of Egypt, which eat up the residue that had escaped and remained after the hail ; they devour even the remnant of men, that had escaped and were not destroyed by ill example. ‘Beware’ therefore, saith Christ, ‘of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.’ The true way to heaven is that of lowliness, mourning, meekness, holy desire, love of God and our neighbour, doing good, and suffering evil for Christ’s sake.

“They are false apostles, who teach the way to heaven any other way than this ; how much more do they fall under that, who teach the very opposite ; the way of pride, levity, of passion, of worldly desires, of loving pleasure more than God, of unkindness to our neighbour, of unconcern for good works, and suffering no evil no persecution for righteousness’ sake.

“False prophets are traitors, both to God and man. These are the first-born of Satan, the eldest sons of Apollyon the destroyer ; these are far above the ordinary rank of cut-throats, for they murder the souls of men. They are continually peopling the realms of night ; and whenever they follow the poor souls they have destroyed ‘hell shall be moved from beneath, to meet them at their coming.’ Beware of false prophets, i. e. teachers or pastors. Beware, O beware, for they be ‘blind leaders of the blind.’

“O ! ye false prophets, how long will ye lie in the name of God ; saying, God hath spoken, and God hath not

spoken by you? How long will ye pervert the right ways of the Lord; putting darkness for light, and light for darkness? How long will ye teach the way of death, and call it the way of life? How long will ye deliver over to Satan the souls whom ye profess to bring to God? For ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men; ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Or them that have gone scarce one step in the ways of God, you devilishly caution against going too far. O! wherefore do ye this; what profit is there in their blood, when they go down into the pit? Miserable profit to you! They shall perish in their iniquity, but their blood will God require at your hands! Have you deceived others until you are deceived yourselves also? Who hath required this at your hand, to teach a way which ye never knew? Are you given up to such strong delusions that ye not only teach, but also believe a lie."

CHAPTER VI.

THE SCRIPTURAL AND APOSTOLICAL CHARACTER OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE AMONG THE WESLEYANS.

"After men became christians, much of their time was spent in prayers and devotion; in religious meetings; in celebrating the eucharist; in conferences; in exhortations; in preachings; and in an affectionate intercourse with one another, and correspondence with other societies. Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit was not very unlike the *UNITAS FRATRUM* of the modern Methodists."—PALEY.

THAT the visible church should become corrupt is foretold in scripture.* While the church was despised, rejected, and persecuted, she was surrounded as by a wall of fire, from the corrupting breath of the world; and from the influx of hypocrites, formalists, and worldlings, with which she was afterwards (when connected with worldly pomp and greatness,) inundated.

It is not very astonishing, all things considered, that the church should lose her first love; but it is very wonderful that through the mystery of iniquity she should become so corrupt, as to be the very antithesis of the true church;

* See 2 Thess. ii. 3--12. Rev. xvii. 3--9.

and that so base a counterfeit should be able to pass for sterling, to such an extent, and for such a long continuance.

St. Paul declared, that even now the mystery of iniquity worketh, and will work. In the apostle's days two corruptions sprung up, and ravaged many of the churches.

The first was, by uniting the rites and ceremonies of Judaism with christianity; which St. Paul condemns in his epistle to the Galatians, and declares it to be destructive of the spirit and genius of christianity; and styles the ministers of these churches, false apostles.

The second was a compounding of paganism with christianity, which was called gnosticism; of the evils of which St. Paul warns Timothy to beware.* But though these false apostles with their corruptions troubled and divided the churches, their effects were comparatively evanescent; like the glare of meteors, for awhile they amazed and dazzled, they deluded and destroyed, yet the time was unfavourable; it was too near the fountain-head of truth for them to succeed extensively and permanently. It was to be the work of darker and more distant ages; when apostolic authority being removed, and the fervor of primitive zeal having abated, that Satan was to succeed in bringing forth a spurious church, which should become extensive, powerful and permanent.

The false church is so complete an apostacy from the true church, that it is likened to every thing that is the very opposite to it. Is the true styled a virgin?—The false is called a harlot. Is the true church compared to those

* See St. Paul's epistle to Timothy.

animals which are docile and innocent?—Then the fallen is compared to a leopard, with the paws of a bear, and the mouth of a lion! Is the true church called Zion and Jerusalem?—Then the false is said to be Sodom, Egypt, and Babylon! So that darkness is not more opposed to light, nor death to life, than the false is to the true church, or the “Pastoral Office” to priestcraft.

The object in introducing this is to shew, that during the universal sway and persecuting reign of the false church, the true church could not possibly retain her visibility; unless in some obscure, remote, or hidden situation; this was the case with the true church in the middle ages. “And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Rev. xii. 6. Which commentators take to be 1260 prophetic years, and in Rev. xi. 3. it is said “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.” This refers to the persecution of God’s two witnesses, * during the wilderness state of the church, which are to be depressed and degraded.

Jones says:—“During the dark ages which succeeded the invasion of Europe, by the barbarous nations; when feudal anarchy distracted the civil government, and a flood of superstition had deluged the church; vital christianity banished from the seats of empire, and loathing the monkish abodes of indolence and vice, meekly retired into

* The word and Ministry.

the sequestered vallies of Piedmont ; and finding there a race of men, unarrayed in hostile armour, uncontaminated by the doctrines and commandments of an apostate church, unambitious in their temper, and simple in their manners ; she preferred their society, and among them took up her abode."

Another writer says :—" When surveying their mountain fastnesses ; their multiplied bulwarks of rocks, rivers, forests, and precipices ; it seems as if the all-wise Creator had from the beginning designed that place as a cabinet, wherein to put some inestimable jewel ; or in which to reserve many thousand souls who should not bow the knee to Baal."

It is the opinion of some that the 1260 years, during which the true, vital, spiritual church was in bondage, expired at the reformation ; for then the errors, superstitions, and tyrannies of Rome were thrown off.

The Reformation was indeed a glorious event ; but when we consider the greatness of the work, and the difficulties, lets, and impediments in the way of completing it—the Reformation, glorious as it was, is thought by many as only a pioneering or pulling down, and preparing the way, by removing the rubbish of ages ; that we might be prepared for the restoration of the hidden church, which was to come up " out of the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her beloved ; and to be the forerunner, or John the baptist to the establishment and glorious enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Others do not think that the hidden church resumed her visibility, until the time the toleration Act was granted by William III. to the nonconformists.

But I will venture a conjecture, that this did not take place until God sent over the MORAVIANS, (a branch of the hidden church,) to light the candle of the WESLEYS and OTHERS; who have with this light illuminated a great part of the world; and through their instrumentality a church has been raised up, distinguished for its simplicity, purity, spreading energy, and voluntary benevolence.

Wilison considers the 1260 years commenced when the temporal power of the Roman Empire was seized by the church; when the Pope became a temporal monarch, and the cardinals temporal princes; which was in the year 478 or 479—which being added to 1260, is just the period, (as he observes,) when the Moravians and Methodists of Oxford produced such a religious excitement in England.

That the whole kingdom was moved, and put into violent agitation from north to south, and from east to west must be acknowledged by all; but whether it was a good or bad excitement, whether it was beneficial or injurious was then, and is even now a matter of dispute. The philosophers and disputers of this world branded it as enthusiasm and fanaticism; the religionists as disorderly, heretical, and schismatical.

Dr. Smollet in his "History of England" writes:—Imposture and fanaticism still hang upon the skirts of religion. Weak minds were seduced by the delusions of a supersti-

tion styled Methodism; raised upon the affectation of superior sanctity, and pretensions to divine illumination. Many thousands were infected with this enthusiasm, by the endeavours of a few obscure preachers, such as Whitfield, and the two Wesleys, who found means to lay the whole kingdom under contribution."

These sentiments have been echoed and re-echoed by many, who have neither talent nor candour to think for themselves.

In answer, Mr. Wesley says:—"Poor Dr. Smollet, thus to transmit to all succeeding generations a whole heap of notorious falsehoods! 'Imposture and fanaticism!' Neither one nor the other had any share in the late revival of scriptural religion; which is no other than the love of God and man, gratitude to our Creator, and good-will to our fellow creatures. Is this delusion and superstition? No! it is real wisdom; it is solid virtue. Does this fanaticism 'hang upon the skirts of religion?' Nay it is the very essence of it. Does the Dr. call this 'enthusiasm?' Why? because he knows nothing about it." "So does this frontless man, blind and bold, stumble on without the least shadow of truth."

The testimony of Scott, Rector of Aston, Sandford, must be put in the opposite scale to that of the Dr., who writes:—"I had been accustomed to hear the people called Methodists mentioned with contempt as ignorant and deluded, as fools and sometimes as madmen, and that with no small degree of complacency and self-preference. I too had despised them as weak enthusiasts. But I now be-

gan to be apprehensive that the tables were about to be turned upon me. If I professed and taught these doctrines, I must no longer be considered as a man of sober understanding; but as one of those persons, whose heads being naturally weak, had been turned by religious studies; and who having fallen under the power of enthusiasm, had become no better than fools or madmen.

“If the spirit of the world, pride, carelessness respecting the soul, and neglect of Christ, be not hateful to God and destructive to men—the gospel (with reverence I speak it) is an imposition. Do you abhor that thought as blasphemy? Abhor as much, a fawning upon Christ from year to year in your closet, calling him there your Lord and God, and then coming out to consult the world how far they will allow you to obey his plain commands without saying, ‘you are a Methodist.’ It would be very well, if some of those who so readily accuse bodies of apparently religious persons of enthusiasm, would favour us with a definition of an enthusiast. In its original meaning, the word has a very favourable sense; and implies, that by a Divine influence upon the soul, a man is filled with an ardour and warmth of zeal in the cause in which he is engaged. Now it is good to be zealously affected in a good thing; and if our ardour of soul be from the Spirit of God, according to the revealed will of God, and for his glory, it is the most heavenly and most beneficial exertion of the human mind.”

Dr. Knox observes:—“Two thirds of the New Testament must appear to the mathematical divines, rank

enthusiasm. Some of them, just from the schools of Cambridge, seem inclined to study theology with a pair of compasses, a rule, and a line. What must they say when they come to such passages as this:—‘That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God?’ Is not the being filled with God *enthusiasm*? So far as the charge of enthusiasm goes, I think Wesleyan Methodism has nearly outlived it; for the most enlightened ministers are now on that point defending and adopting it.”

But it is charged with being schismatical. But this charge has been frequently and fully refuted;* that I need only add facts are against it. They were passive, not active in their separation from the established church. Their scriptural doctrines, catholic spirit, and extraordinary success is sufficient to shew that “it is the Lord’s doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.”

Thus I have shewn that Wesleyan Methodism was a great revival of primitive christianity. I would confirm this view by shewing that all the marks of a true church are to be found in Wesleyan Methodism.

“That the church differs very much from other commonwealths; for they are established by human reason and prudence; but this by the wisdom and counsel of God. For he has inwardly called us by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, but outwardly by the ministry and labour of the pastors and teachers.

“It is a christian commonwealth, for it is called by the

* See Dialogues between a Churchman and Methodist.

apostle *the house, the building*, because it is one family, which one father or master governs; and in which is a communion of all spiritual things.

“It is also called Christ’s flock and sheep, whereof he is the door and the shepherd.

“It is called the spouse of Christ. ‘I have betrothed you as a chaste virgin to one husband, which is Christ,’ says the apostle to the Corinthians. Lastly, the church is the body of Christ. These views avail very much to stir up the faithful to behave themselves worthy of the immense goodness and mercy of God, who has chosen them to be his people.” *

Nor should we fear Methodism being tested by the propositions of Dr. Geo. Hicks, who says:—

Prop. 1. “To understand the constitution of the catholic church as a society, it will be requisite to observe by what names it is set forth in the scriptures; where it is called ‘the kingdom of God, and dominion of Christ;’ ‘the city of God;’ ‘the house and household of God;’ and because this house of God is a holy house in which he is especially present, it is therefore compared to a temple wherein he is worshipped by priests and people. It is also called the polity, which we translate the commonwealth of Israel; and the body of Christ, to signify that it is a spiritual society, or incorporation, of which Christ is the head, and all particular churches are members.

Prop. 2. “It is to be considered that this kingdom, dominion, city, spiritual house, body and polity of Christ

* Catechism of the Council of Trent. Part I. Page 88.

had a being in the world under its own magistrates and rulers, independent of the secular powers, three hundred years together, before the empire became christian, and afterwards in the reigns of apostate and heretical emperors who persecuted the church.

Prop. 3. "That Christ the archetypal eternal Melchisedec is the king of this spiritual kingdom, Lord of this spiritual dominion and supreme head of this spiritual corporation under whom are his ministers; to whom in their respective dominions and jurisdictions; he requires obedience of his subjects, of what rank or condition soever, as to his stewards, vicegerents, or chief ministers over his church."

Indeed the article of the church of England is a better definition, and more descriptive of the Wesleyan, than the established church herself.

"A BODY OF BELIEVERS gathered out of the world by the grace of God, through the preaching of the gospel; to whom the word is preached, and the ordinances faithfully administered."

The Wesleyans are a religious fraternity or brotherhood. And our Lord's words are fulfilled in them; "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." They have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit of God. The members of the true church should be holy. The apostle writes "to the church of God, which is at Corinth; to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." "For Christ is made unto them of God, *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and re-*

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demption. But it may be said, there are members in the Wesleyan church who are not holy ; there may be such *de facto* but not *de jure*. God has given them no right, and true pastors will not allow open sin ; for discipline is designed to separate the vile from the precious.

The true church keeps the **UNITY** of the spirit in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. This unity of the spirit is only to be found in the mystical body of Christ. "For there is one body, and one spirit, and one hope of our calling ; one Lord, one faith, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. So that faith uniting all believers to one Lord, love blending all in one great affection, and the Spirit the one moving life.

But **UNION**, not unity, is the oneness of the different branches of the visible church ; this is the bond of peace, the loving bond of perfectness ; whatever tendency a mere external unity of christian profession, worship, and discipline might have (were it possible) to promote real inward piety, and benefit and bless the world. It may exist to a considerable extent in connection with all that is formal, hypocritical, and worldly ; and even in connection with what is base, abominable, and diabolical. But without living faith, spiritual devotion, supreme love to God, and love to the souls and bodies of men ; leading us to self-denial, and glorifying God in our bodies and spirits which are his, the whole is nothing but vain parade and solemn mockery, and not the church of Christ. To make the

church one vast visible hierarchy, under one visible head by means of coercion, has been the constant aim and great evil of the Romish church ; and must be the folly and disgrace, if not the destruction, of all Protestants who follow in the steps of papal Rome. The Wesleyans maintain unity among themselves and cultivate a spirit of union towards other branches of the church.

The true church must be growing, aggressive, spreading, and triumphant ; for it is likened to a small seed growing to a large tree ; to leaven hid in five measures of meal, gradually leavening the whole lump ; to the spreading of fire from a spark or point of power.

“ See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace.”

Christ's kingdom must increase. The world must be subdued, the universe filled with the glory of God. The graces of the church are thus set forth :—“ Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits ; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron ; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense ; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices : a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.” What beauty, what abundance and variety of excellencies are united in the church of Christ. God's people are an incomparable people. “ Who is like unto thee ? O people saved of the Lord ! Who is like unto thee ? in the beauty and harmony of thy doctrines ; in the reality and depth of thy experience ; in the greatness of thy privileges. In thy suc-

cesses and triumphs, who is so happy, so beloved, so honoured of God? We need not stay a moment to shew how these things apply to the growing greatness, beauty, and excellency of Wesleyan Methodism.

METHODISM originated in the University of Oxford, when the light, life, and zeal of the church of England was at the lowest ebb; if not quite extinct, when the wants of a rapidly increasing population could in no way be adequately supplied; and when the elements of infidelity and disorder, (which the spiritual and moral influence of the establishment could not so much as have kept at bay,) would probably, have overflowed our land, had it not been for Methodism; and a tragedy as dark and bloody as that of France, would have been acted in Britain.

Methodism was nursed and disciplined, under the paternal care and vigilant influence, of some of the loftiest minds and master spirits of their day; who were also men of the sincerest and deepest piety, several of whom were polite scholars, and clergymen of the established church.

There was indeed one thing which many have considered a great irregularity, viz.—The employing of laymen to preach the gospel. But Mr. Wesley retorted this upon his clerical objectors, “if you will not come to my assistance; (the work is great and pressing,) I must employ such assistants as God gives me in this work.”

When we consider the character, talents, and habits of clergymen, and the nature of the work at that time; we perceive that they would not have been fit instruments for

it; and when we consider the talents, labours, and successes of the first Wesleyan preachers, we may say, (with Mrs. Wesley,) they were as much called and qualified for the work as Mr. Wesley was himself.

However we ought not to expect all that form and order in any new system of religion, as in one that has existed for centuries. In the commencement of christianity, and of the reformation, the mint and cummin were lost sight of, in weightier matters of love, law, and faith.

But, to proceed to our subject, let us observe:—

1. The unity and uniformity among the pastors of the Wesleyan connexion.

The act of uniformity in the established church, failed ultimately accomplishing the object at which it aimed; and at present, (in point of doctrine,) you may find every grade of error from the *antinomian* to the *pelagian*; and from the *mystic* to the *socinian*. And far more uncanonical and unconstitutional efforts to do good, are now in operation; than poor John Wesley and his coadjutors were ever charged with.

The Wesleyan Ministers, not only hold, but speak the same thing. There is on the grand fundamental truths, no dissension among them; they are truly united, being of one heart and of one mind, they love as brethren; and allowing for little misunderstandings, and the common frailty of man, they are much as the apostles were; “baptized into one spirit, walking by the same rule, and minding the same thing.” This uniformity does not arise

so much from tests and articles as from divine illumination; and the sound and orthodox standards they are required to study and understand.

Not but that they think a person on being received into any church, should first be examined in reference to their soundness in the faith, according to the views of that body of christians; but further, that as man is liable to error this *testing* should be annually repeated, that in uniform truth "they may keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life."

There is no distinction of order among the Wealeyan Pastors. They are all PRESBYTERS. In any circuit where there are many ministers, one is the superintendant, which, (together with many other offices) is not one of authority and permanency; but of order, care and honour, "they are all brethren."

In the Presbyterian Church, at the annual synod they have a moderator to take the chair; but lest out of this should grow any superior order of ministers at all approaching to Bishops, the moderatorship is in turns; each member of the synod in his turn becoming moderator.

The chairmen of districts, which resemble the presbyterian moderators; are chosen yearly, by ballot in conference out of the senior preachers in each district.

An increase of office is considered honourable; but there is no emolument connected therewith, nor any assurance of the continuance of it; excepting those of missionary secretaries, editors, book-steward, and the governors, and professors connected with our academies and institutions;

who being wholly employed in their separate avocations, connected with these various institutions, are supported by the funds belonging to those institutions, and frequently continue in them for life; although they are re-appointed every six or seven years.

There is however just as much difference between the larger and smaller circuits, that a due reward may be given to superior talent; and sufficient emulation may be excited, as to keep the minds of the ministers from stagnating.

To conclude, we may say, that in all bodies some will distinguish themselves by their superior talents, piety or zeal; which superiority will always be recognised and honoured; so age, also will bring superior discernment and authority, and commanding reverence. Excepting these things, Wesleyan Ministers are all equal.

2. The simplicity of the "Pastoral Office," among the Wesleyans.

The Ministry grows up out of the body. Their pastors are first entered among them as private members, having been truly awakened and converted; without any reference to the ministry, they walk for several years in a humble and unblameable manner in the church, and distinguish themselves by their talents and zeal, afterwards they are examined and continued on trial for four years, before they are received into the "Pastoral Office." The conference acts up to the apostle's caution. "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

The requisite qualifications of the candidates for the ministry are "aptness to teach;" an ability "rightly to divide the word of truth;" and to give to every man "a portion of meat in due season;" teaching every man and warning every man in all revealed wisdom; "able also to stop the mouths of gainsayers."

After the candidate enters the sacred office, he has a circuit appointed to him, and full employment in preaching, and support provided for him, as long as he continues to walk "worthy of his high vocation." This constant preaching (where nature has been bountiful) frequently produces extempore speakers of astonishing eloquence and power; and some in the midst of their labours have also become learned.

But, as a body, the Wesleyans expect that divine influence will accompany the word of their ministers; and their only hope of success is in the influence and operations of the Holy Ghost.

There have been among every race of Methodist Preachers men of considerable learning. Sufficient learning has always been in the body for every needful purpose; but there has been great inequality in this respect. To remedy this evil an institution has been established of late to assist the junior preachers. No man enters this; but such as are ministers elect, that is on the president's list; having passed their quarterly meeting, district meeting, and the conference; and no man enters this institution who is not (even prior to his entrance,) considered qualified for the work of the ministry; but to whom a few

years study of the elements of dead languages, the mathematics, composition, and a number of other things connected with our body, will give greater uniformity in learning; and also greater facilities, especially to those who are going on foreign Missions.

3. Their ministry was received at first principally by the poor, and ascended from the low to higher and more enlightened classes; which is the scriptural and apostolic order of progression. "To the poor the gospel is preached." For God hath chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. "And some of them believed and consorted with Paul and Silas, of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."

4. Their oppositions and persecutions, from professor and profane, from high and low, from the pulpit and the press, by riots and tumults; by tarring and feathering, ducking and pelting rotten eggs, from even press-gangs and prisons; all remind us of the apostolic times, except that the laws of England were beginning to be tolerant; prompt in defending the rights of conscience. But it may be said of them as it was of the primitive christians. "Ye endured a great fight of affliction."

The objections brought against them arose from ignorance, prejudice and enmity. Some objected to them for preaching up good works too much; others for preaching faith too much, and not good works enough. Some objected that they departed too much from the church; others that

they adhered too closely to it. Some thought the government too democratical; others too aristocratical, but "having obtained help from God, we continue unto this day testifying" the same things.

5. Notwithstanding all this; their word ran and was glorified, and many were added to the church. Their societies spread through England, Wales, Ireland, and many parts of Scotland. They then crossed the atlantic, and commenced their operations in America; and now their missions are as extensive and successful as those of any church upon the face of the earth; so greatly has the word of the Lord, grown and prevailed."

6. The missionary character of the "Pastoral Office" among the Wesleyans, is seen in their aggressive and leavening operations.

Every little society that maintained its purity, became a centre of power and life, from whence religion spread to surrounding parts; for vital christianity is aggressive, it is like leaven, seed, fire; from the point where the fire or leaven begins to operate, it spreads and grows, ever mighty to prevail." Religion spreading from these centres must be gradual; instantaneous national conversions can only be nominal. Wesleyan Methodism to every unprejudiced observer must appear to move along the same as the apostolical churches.

The candidates for the ministry, among the Wesleyans, are not ordained over any particular church, or to labour

constantly in any place. Some of them indeed feel it impressed on their hearts to offer themselves, to go to the remotest parts of the world. Many of them have returned from distant and dangerous missions ; and others are preparing, and waiting to be sent.

Charles Wesley therefore, as though personifying the deep sympathy of the Wesleyan body, and their zeal for God's glory in the salvation of the whole world, exclaimed,

"O for a trumpet voice, On all the world to call ;
To bid their hearts rejoice, In him who died for all."

So that in the course of a hundred years they have sent forth ambassadors among the heathen, and in every part of the globe they have established churches. Under the influence of their preaching, the spiritual chaos is organizing, spots of spiritual life and loveliness are on every hand presenting themselves, full of light, purity, order, and happiness.

What a thousand pities it is, that the "Pastoral Office" should ever have lost its missionary character ; and that even now in some places, itinerancy should be scowled at, and treated with contempt.

The revival of the missionary character of the "Pastoral Office" in this country originated, and has been carried out from the beginning by the Wesleyans, and is strong evidence that God poured upon them, as he did upon the primitive church, the Holy Ghost. The love of Christ constraining them, they counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might win souls. "And they went every where, preaching the kingdom of God, signs following.

It was not for gain, or from education, or profession, that they preached ; but God thrust them, as it were, into

the vineyard; and such was their love for precious souls, that no terrors alarmed them, no labours wearied them, but their only wish on earth was, to spend, and be spent in the cause of Christ. Their circle of labour, like the disturbed lake; became larger and larger, until every quarter of the globe was encircled in it.

Revivals of religion, those gleaming heralds of a brighter day, shot across the heavens, to give them patience and hope; for though Satan raged, and men persecuted, and kings and priests took counsel together against Christ and his church they fully believed that they were kindling a fire that would spread, until the whole world should be wrapped in its purifying flame, and a new heavens and a new earth spring forth, in which shall dwell righteousness.

"The world is my parish" was the motto of our venerable founder; and adopting this as their own, they rushed into every opening door. What is all this, but carrying out and filling up the plans of the apostles?

7. The peaceableness and loyalty of the Wesleyan Pastors.

From their commencement they were anti-sectarian in their principles; embracing persons of various creeds and different churches. Their professed object was not to spread any sectarian principles, but scriptural holiness through the land; and so deeply absorbed were the first ministers of this connexion, in the important work of saving souls, that they had no time to wrangle about matters of dubious and perplexing speculation; they endeavoured to "follow peace with all men;" for their motto was "the friends of all, the enemies of none."

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The founder of Methodism was distinguished for his loyalty, who also succeeded in bringing most of his coadjutors into his own views and feelings; and at the present time the Wesleyans are behind no body of christians in point of loyalty; substantial proofs of which have been frequently witnessed from their conduct.

To conclude. The Wesleyan Pastors are apostolical and scriptural if this can be proved:—

(1.) “By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, and love unfeigned.

(2.) Were the primitive pastors distinguished:—By the word of truth, by the power of God; by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour; by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well known? So are Wesleyan Pastors.

(3.) Were primitive pastors known by—Giving no offence in any thing that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving themselves as the ministers of God in much patience: in afflictions; in necessities; in distresses; in stripes; in imprisonment; in tumults; in labours; in watchings; in fastings? If these are the marks of TRUE Ministers, then the WESLEYAN Ministers can claim the character of scriptural pastors.

And again, there is an energy in Methodism that bears down all that comes against it; and an elasticity in it that enables it to embrace all who are willing to come and receive its privileges, and protection; yea it seems capable of being carried out to an indefinite extent.

CONCLUDING REMARKS,

AND ADDRESS TO BOTH PASTORS AND THEIR FLOCKS.

THE claim of pastors to the affectionate regards and christian submission of the flocks committed to their charge have been considered in the preceeding pages; and some who have read them are satisfied this is the case; to all I would give the advice of the apostle. "Know them that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." Beware of disaffection, of insubordination and divisions.

Consider how many and great are the advantages, the church derives from true and faithful ministers. Consider their claims; their work; their discouragements; oppositions; dangers, and responsibilities. "They are the ministers of God for your good." "They watch for your souls, as they that must give account."

But others who have read over this essay will perhaps think that it should have proved quite the contrary; that ministers who have spoken unto the people the word of life; should submit themselves unto their flocks, and be ruled over by the people in the Lord; who as a church should be the overseers of the Bishop:—To these I would

reply, "he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and that by such conduct, (notwithstanding the high names they may give it,) they not only endanger their salvation; but ensure their damnation.

Despisers of the "Pastoral Office" are the usurpers of it; and are in danger of falling into the sin and destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

Let respect and reverence for the "Pastoral Office," or the opposite feelings and conduct, enable us to test the soundness or unsoundness of sects and parties; for those systems that are continually and rancourously crying down as priestcraft and tyranny, and anti-christ; every other system that does not, with them, cause their pastors to betray their trust and office, and to let the people reign over them, are unsound. The great principle of the divine administration is:—They "that honour me I will honour; but they "that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

Time was, when God was openly and directly dishonoured, but God is also dishonoured when his Son is stripped of his divine attributes, and honours; and refused any honour but what is due to human and created excellencies; for "he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father."

Even so both the Father and the Son are dishonoured when their ambassadors and servants are despised, and stripped of every respect and title, but such as are common to the flock; yea all the private members are lifted up to be Lords, and the pastors are put under them as their servants, and subject to their instruction and authority.

Now this, my dear brethren is a dishonouring of God, of Christ, and of pastors at one, and the same time. This conduct is pleaded for on the ground of what our Lord said to James and John, the sons of Zebedee; who requested that one might sit on the right hand, and the other on the left of Christ in his glory. "And when the ten heard they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant."

Now this passage I think cannot apply to the church in general for it was spoken to the ten. So that what is to be gathered from it is this:—First. That no worldly or political pomp, or power was to be connected with the pastorate. Second. That there was to be no distinction of superiority among pastors, but that which "would grow out of more abundant labours; and that greatness consisted in the office or work of ministering; and finally that he who was to be chiefest must be the servant of all the other pastors: (literally) the president, or one who is devoted to, and employed in promoting the interests of all. This passage, my dear brethren, instead of supporting such notions, speaks as strongly as can be on the other side of the question. I fear that the principle is anti-christian and consequently dangerous; for if pastors, receiving their power and authority from God, have any servile em-

ployment from the people, and become in every sense of the word, their servants; is not this dishonourable, both to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his servants?

I would close this address in the words of a modern divine, cautioning you to beware of that specious, smooth-tongued and far-famed latitudinarianism. "The liberality of mind in respect of religious opinions, sometimes so much boasted of, is not very different from vanity. It is the desire of being thought more enlarged, and unrestrained in views and sentiments than others; it scorns the distinction of doctrine prescribed by creeds and formularies, and declines the restriction of confessions of faith and legal standards; and proposes that every man, even public functionaries of the church, may believe and teach and maintain what they will. This is thought exceedingly liberal, and is loudly applauded by the unthinking and superficial. It also finds many abettors among the generous, whose warm open temper, dispose them to promote every thing that seems benevolent, without regard to relative circumstances and consequences; and among the sanguine, who seldom observe difficulty, or apprehend danger in any new scheme or enterprize; multitudes will follow in the same train, carried along by the mere influence of imitation, without either inclination or capacity to examine or judge for themselves." [Rankins Institutes, p. 260.]

And now my very dear and revered brethren in the ministry, I humbly and modestly address myself to you; on the importance of ministers being as efficient as possible.

seeing so much depends upon this in the winning of souls.

1. Having been separated from secular pursuits, you should "intermeddle with all knowledge;" but especially you should be "mighty in the scriptures. These should dwell richly in you; and being scribes well instructed," you would then be able to "bring forth out of your treasury things new and old."

When Ministers have to present unto the people, not only old traditions, but new, clear, comprehensive, pointed, powerful, sublime and harmonious views; of divine truth "every mouth must be stopped," that would gainsay; and such ministers would mightily convince, enlighten, and comfort.

Ministers should study human nature, as well as the scriptures; all the spiritual maladies and diseases to which it is subject, all its deep subterfuges and disguises; all the workings of fallen nature, the acting of the law, the gospel, and the temptations of Satan, upon the different powers and faculties of the soul:—That he may know when to lead the sinner to Christ for a present and free salvation; and to lead them on to "the fulness of the blessings of the Gospel of peace," which forms a very important and delightful part of the Pastoral work.

"Happy, if with my latest breath
I may but gasp his Name;
Preach him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb."

They that win souls are wise. Yes, this is the exercise of wisdom, this the evidence of wisdom. God's method

of saving sinners must be simply shewn, unincumbered by unnecessary distinctions and exceptions. Sin must be pardoned or punished. The sinner must see its evils, and feel its weight; be aware of the dangerous circumstances into which it has brought him; he must turn with sorrow and confession from it, embracing the truth as it is in Jesus, and the promises made over unto him through the Saviour; his faith must embrace, and unite him to Christ, and to Christ's merits and mystical body, and bring him to participate in all the great and precious promises, which in him are "yea and amen." So that living faith is a substitute for righteousness because it unites us to, and interests us in Christ's righteousness.

The right administration of counsel, direction, and encouragement to anxious enquirers, and earnest seekers of salvation; as well as of encouragement and comfort to God's tempted and tried people requires much knowledge and experience.

"To you it is given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom." "Ye are not ignorant of Satan's devices;" but able to "give to every man his portion of meat in due season."

You must my dear brethren cultivate a humble dependence on God; for a timid and diffident disposition is opposed to your commission, which is "not to fear, and to speak with all authority and boldness;" for "the fear of man frequently "brings a snare," would damp your fervor and zeal; so that you would not properly "cry out and spare not," and would fear "to shew Israel his sin,

and Jacob his transgression; the evil of his sin:—the blighting, deforming, soul withering, and spirit damning of sin, and then to hold out kindly, mildly, and in an encouraging manner, the necessity and beauty of holiness; and its attainment by faith, preparatory to our entrance into heaven.

So shall your doctrine, like that of Moses be as “rain to the mown grass,” and as showers to water the earth;” yea “like dew to the tender herb.” Under such a ministry, shall “the righteous flourish, and enjoy “abundance of peace.”

The value of souls should keep awake your compassionate zeal. View sin's ravages, the devil's malice; the world's activity:—See the numerous nurseries and hot-beds for vice; the vast myriads perishing every hour:—See them sink into destruction; hear their death wails; and reflect as the curtain drops and all is o'er, “their souls are lost to be saved no more.” Think of the possibility of saving a greater number of souls than you do, did you but use all your efforts; and by faith seize all the promises which God hath made to faithful pastors; then indeed would you “go forth with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills would break forth before” you into singing” and all the trees of the field would clap their hands.” Discouragements, difficulties, and oppositions in this work must be expected, and must also be met and vanquished for “greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

To be instrumental in saving a soul is the utmost

stretch of mercy and benevolence which can be exercised by mortals. For could you by devoted and constant endeavours, communicate unto an insect, all the noble faculties and sympathies of human nature, and then exalt it to be an angel to dwell with God for ever, it would be charity of an infinitely inferior order, compared with saving a soul; for an insect enjoys its brief existence, rolling in unchecked bliss, and then sinks into annihilation, but a soul if not saved, how awful! how overwhelming! how endless must be its doom!

As then, all our strength and success as ministers comes from God, we ought ever to lie under a constant sense of our weakness and insufficiency, to accomplish the objects contemplated by the ministry. The apostles themselves disclaimed any sufficiency to think or do any thing as of themselves; but they declared that their sufficiency was of God, so that St. Paul styles the Corinthian converts "Epistles of Christ" "ministered by" the apostles, "written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart;" as though the apostles were the spirits *amanuenses*. There is a ministerial fitness, however, which God honours; natural gifts, and learning, when sanctified are enabled to lay hold of prejudice and pride, and drag men from their dark retreats and refuges of lies into the light of truth, and under the influences of God. In ordinary cases of conversion, ordinary instruments are sufficient; but there are cases of extraordinary enmity, and hostility to the Gospel which require extraordinary talents and efforts, on

the part of the instrument to accomplish their conversion.

I would again exhort you continually to keep in view those illustrious examples of devoted zeal and diligence which have cast such a lustre over the "Pastoral Office." Imitate the courage, caution and vigilance of the reformers.

"Who to death stood firm
That they might shield the reformation germ;
Whose tears and blood its tender fibres fed,
Strengthened its roots, and lifted up its head;
Who are exalted, and as Martyrs crowned,
In heaven applauded, and on earth renowned."

Again let the examples of the Wesleys and the first Methodist Preachers, who were so distinguished for diligence and success in reviving the work of God, animate you to carry out, to the fullest extent, their work and designs. Nor can we contemplate many of our modern Missionaries without advantage. Look at the herculean labours of Dr. Carey, and his colleagues; or the enterprizes of Martin and Buchanan, the fearlessness of a Lee, or a Shrewsbury; or the sacrifices of our Shaws, our Cluff, and Hodgson. Whatever emulation or improvement, however, we may derive from studying such examples; all are lost in the superior glory of the example and labours of Christ and the apostles.

Lastly. You must not only set before you such illustrious examples; but also aim to be such yourselves, to your flock; going before your people and saying "Be ye followers of us, as we are also of Christ." Ministers should

shine not only in the pulpit, but likewise as lights in the world ; by holy walking, being ensamples to the flock. The apostle exhorted Timothy to be an example to “believers in word and conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” “In all things shew thyself a pattern of good works that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed.” Then will you indeed be able to say with the apostles ye are our witness and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you.

This will be a mighty forerunner to public labour and a constant application of it ; if we consider the amplitude and various branches of the apostle’s exhortation. “Be thou an example—I. “In word.” II. “In conversation.” III. “In charity.” IV. “In spirit.” V. “In faith.” VI. “In purity.” “In word”—strict veracity and punctuality. “In conversation,”—“where piety, and modesty meet in young ministers, it will preserve their youth from contempt ; and where levity and vanity are found, it will expose not only youth but grey hairs to contempt and scorn.” [Burket.]

Your conversation should be wise and instructive, not idle and impertinent, much less frothy and profane. Let something edifying fall continually from your lips : neither too assuming nor too prostrate. Behave not thyself either above or below thyself. “In charity.”—Shew benevolence towards all, as far as thou hast ability and opportunity. Nothing gives ministers greater advantages or success in their labours than charitable distribution ; it erects a throne in the hearts of their people, when wisely managed ;

making it as evident as possible that you are not actuated by selfish and worldly designs; that you seek not theirs, but them. The more spiritual and unmixed with temporal things a minister's conduct is, the more likely is he spiritually to profit them. "In spirit."—In humility and meekness. The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men; patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." "In spirit." i. e. in zeal, in warmth of spirit; in fervency of affection; sympathising with all who are in trouble or distress; tender hearted to the afflicted, and rejoicing with them that rejoice; in love to the brethren and all saints, and in devotionality of spirit. "In faith." In fidelity to and constancy in the true religion, not submitting either to be huffed or wheedled out of the truth. For it is a sacred *depositum*; a holy treasure, which ministers must transmit to their posterity, as pure as our forefathers did to us. "In purity."—In chastity and cleanness; abstaining from sensual lusts; from wantonness and worldly mindedness; choosing spiritual delights for your entertainment; knowing that these must form the basis of your future and eternal happiness.

By all this we see how much it is in the power of a minister to gain to himself a due esteem; to screen his office from contempt; and to give efficacy to his doctrines and labours.

And O! my dear brethren; when the time shall come that you must be separated from your office, and labours, and every thing in this world; "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward:" beware

indeed of a false and vain confidence ; but, following the light of divine revelation, and supported by a personal and conscious interest in the atonement ; and looking to God for the realization of all his promises supports and comforts you will then lay aside all dependance on office and labours and be enabled to cry—" Now Lord lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." " For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love."

AND NOW, "ALMIGHTY AND EVERLASTING GOD WHO ALONE WORKEST GREAT MARVELS ; SEND DOWN UPON THY PASTORS, AND ALL CONGREGATIONS COMMITTED TO THEIR CHARGE, THE HEALTHFUL SPIRIT OF THY GRACE ; AND THAT THEY MAY TRULY PLEASE THEE, POUR UPON THEM THE CONTINUAL DEW OF THY BLESSING. GRANT THIS, O LORD, FOR THE HONOUR OF OUR ADVOCATE, AND MEDIATOR, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN."

THE END.



